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STOP ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

The Liberal Government Continues The Harper Government's Policies

By Janine Solanki

Stop Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia! Liberal Government Continues Harper Government Policies

In November 2015, the Liberal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came to power with the catchphrase that “Canada is back”. Back from where and to what is up to interpretation, but one thing is for sure – Canada under past and current Liberal and Conservative governments continues to be the country which puts deadly weapons into the hands of some of the most brutal and tyrannical regimes in the world.

In 2014 under the Conservative Harper government, a \$15-billion deal was struck to sell “Light Armoured Vehicles” or LAVs to Saudi Arabia, a country that is world-renowned for having one of the worst human rights records. While this deal received some criticism when initially signed, it has now received renewed opposition as the new Liberal government refuses to cancel the deal.

For every argument made against the sale of the military vehicles, the Liberal government has defended their decision with justifications which really don't add up. Even before being elected as Prime Minister, in October 2015 Justin Trudeau tried to downplay the arms deal as the sale of mere “jeeps” to Saudi Arabia. However despite the deceiving name of “Light Armoured Vehicles” a *Globe and Mail* investigation found that these military vehicles will be equipped with machine guns, medium- or high-calibre weapons or even big-barrel guns that can fire 105mm shells or anti-tank missiles.

After the Liberal government was elected the opposition to this arms deal increased. On February 18, 2016 Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion made the contradictory statement that “the government doesn't approve this contract. The government simply refuses to terminate a contract that has already been approved by the former government.” On May 11, 2016 in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defended his decision to uphold the deal with the excuse, “We need

to be able to project [to] the world that when Canada agrees to something, it sticks to its word”

If Canada's word is the issue here, then why isn't the government of Canada upholding it's own regulations? This arms deal is creating so much controversy because it goes against Canada's own laws which restrict export permits for weapons sales to countries with poor human rights records “unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable risk that the goods might be used against the civilian population.” This article will go further into the many ways which Saudi Arabia is renowned for their abysmal human rights record, but first lets see how Trudeau and Dion defended themselves against the most direct evidence that should enact their own regulations and stop the export of arms to Saudi Arabia. On May 11, 2016 *The Globe and Mail* released video footage from 2012 and 2015 which shows similar models of Light Armoured Vehicles being used to violently attack civilians in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, home to large populations of the suppressed Shia minority. Ali Adubisi, director of the Berlin-based European-Saudi Organization for Human Rights, says Saudi authorities have deployed armoured vehicles against Shia civilians in Eastern Province more than 15 times since 2011. Upon being questioned about the video footage, Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion still defended the sale of the military vehicles to Saudi Arabia, claiming that “The fundamental point is that this is not Canadian military equipment” in the video footage. If Saudi Arabia is using non-Canadian made LAVs against civilians, I would say this is enough evidence that the Canadian sale of LAVs will be used against civilians too, especially as they are being sold to the Saudi Arabian National Guard, the force that deals with “internal threats”.

Stéphane Dion's claim that the agreement was a done deal and could not be canceled was yet another embarrassing lie by the Liberal government. It came to light that on April 8, 2016 Stéphane Dion signed off on



export permits to ship \$11 billion worth of the \$15-billion military vehicle sale. In the process of a military arms deal, the sanctioning of Canadian arms exports is a decision which is not supposed to be affected by whether a contract is already signed, and there is no guarantee that a sale is officially approved until permit applications are approved. This approval was a decision made under the Liberal government, signed by the Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion.

With all of the government's justifications exposed, Trudeau and Dion are now playing the card that they simply can't pass up the opportunity of jobs that this deal will create. The contract is projected to create 3,000 jobs over 14 years. This number is hardly going to have a huge effect on the unemployment rate in Canada. Besides, do we create jobs at the expense of humanity? While the government of Canada may think this is an excuse, people in Canada do not think this is morally justifiable. In a poll by Nanos Research for *The Globe and Mail*, “nearly six out of 10 respondents said human rights should trump job creation when it comes to Canada's export policy. In the survey of 1,000 Canadians from Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 87% of respondents say they have a negative, or “somewhat negative opinion” of the authoritarian Saudi regime.” People in Canada want jobs, but they want honest and dignified jobs, not jobs making weapons to fuel the imperialist war machine.

Who is Saudi Arabia?

It is pretty difficult to justify the good intentions Saudi Arabia might have in their use of military vehicles, considering both their internal human rights record and foreign policy.

Saudi Arabia is a country devoid of democratic institutions, and is in fact an

absolute monarchy where decisions are made by the ruling family and their clique. Saudi Arabia has one of the highest execution rates in the world which is currently skyrocketing. A total of 158 people were killed by death penalty in 2015, and according to Amnesty International most were beheaded or killed by firing squad, with the bodies sometimes displayed in public after the executions. As of May 29, 2016, the 95th execution this year was carried out. This increasing rate includes the largest mass execution in the country since 1980, when 47 men were put to death on January 2nd, 2016. Among those executed was Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, a prominent Shia cleric convicted of vague charges, which according to Human Rights Watch were based largely on his peaceful criticism of Saudi officials.

Basic human and democratic rights are denied in Saudi Arabia. The existence of political parties, trade unions or independent human rights groups are not permitted, and all public gatherings, including peaceful demonstrations, remain prohibited under an order issued by the Ministry of the Interior in 2011. Those who seek to defy the ban face arrest, prosecution and imprisonment on charges such as “inciting people against the authorities”. In March 2016, the regime warned that it would arrest and prosecute anyone who publicly criticized Saudi Arabia’s military actions in Yemen.

Women’s rights in Saudi Arabia are practically non-existent. To name just a few restrictions women face, women must be accompanied by a male chaperon to go outside of their home and do not have the freedom to travel, open a bank account, or do many other basic things without their husband’s or guardian’s permission. Women are prohibited from driving, despite heroic protests to defy the driving ban.

For decades, particularly over the last 30 years, Saudi Arabia has played an important role as a client of Western imperialism in the Middle East. From allowing US military bases to operate in Saudi Arabia, to militarily intervening in favour of US interests, Saudi Arabia is an important ally as the US expands their hegemony and new era of war and occupation in the Middle East and North Africa. In 2011 during popular uprisings in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia sent in troops, tanks and the famous Light Armoured Vehicles to violently suppress the peaceful protests. Reports assert that these LAV’s were Canadian-made, a

claim to which the government of Canada has responded with a weak assertion that “it doesn’t believe the vehicles were used to combat protests” according to The Globe and Mail. In neighboring Yemen, since March 26, 2015 Saudi Arabia has carried out a bombing campaign and outright war against the people of Yemen, resulting in a humanitarian crisis and the deaths of approximately 8,500 people

doesn’t care about jobs or keeping it’s good word. It cares about a business deal that enhances Canada’s reputation as key player in the new era of war and occupation unfolding today. That is, a weapons manufacturer and supplier that keeps this war drive rolling and profits from it. Saudi Arabia’s human rights records may be unsavory to peace-loving people in Canada, but to the government of Canada Saudi Arabia as a key ally, one that they would like to see sufficiently armed to keep down dissent both at home in Saudi Arabia and throughout the region.

This is nothing new for Canada. Since 2001 Canada has played a key role in the war and occupation of Afghanistan. Soon after Canada’s involvement in Afghanistan began, the mask of peacekeeping came off with the words of Canada’s former top general and Chief of Defense Staff Rick Hillier, who in 2005 said that Canada was in Afghanistan fighting “detestable murderers and scumbags,” and that the job of the Canadian Forces was “to kill people”.

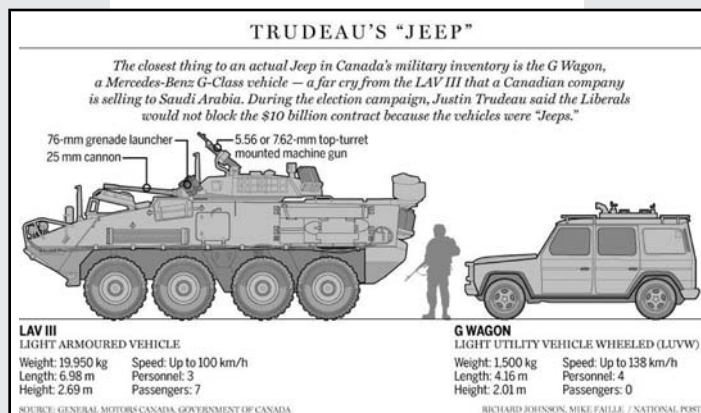
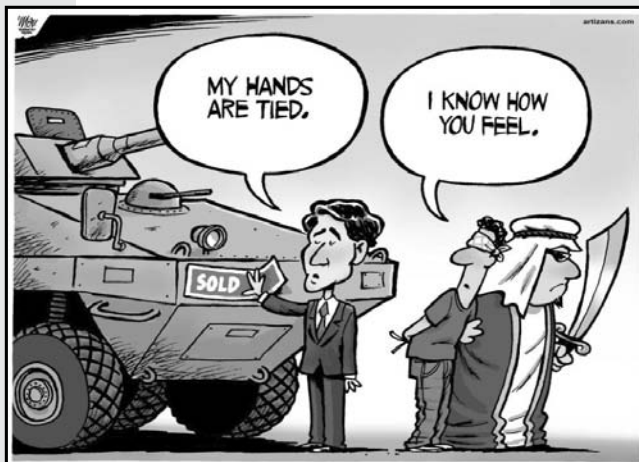
In the war in Iraq, from the beginning in 2003 Canada had a role in supplying weapons, alongside providing naval and military personnel support. Canada was the largest foreign supplier of arms to the US for the war in Iraq. In 2004 the Canadian corporation SNC-Lavalin had a 5-year contract to supply the US Army with 300-500 million bullets per year.

Peace-loving people in Canada aren’t fooled

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion can make all the excuses they like, but peace-loving people in Canada aren’t buying their lies on the arms deal with Saudi Arabia. Working and poor people in Canada must come together to demand that the Liberal government stop selling arms to Saudi Arabia, and to dismantle Canada’s arms industry altogether. People in Canada want dignified jobs, not jobs that are at the expense of human life, for weapons manufactures profiting off the blood of others. Money must spent for social welfare and well being of people not for killing of innocent people around the world.

**PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TREADEU,
CANCEL THE ARMS DEAL
WITH SAUDI ARABIA!**

*Follow Janine Solanki on Twitter:
@janinesolanki*



as of April 2016.

Saudi Arabia has had a big role to play in the US-fomented civil war in Syria over the last five years. While the US government was initially trying to deny involvement in backing mercenaries in Syria, Saudi Arabia did their dirty work. In June 2012 The Guardian released reports that Saudi Arabia was putting so-called Syrian rebels on a Saudi payroll to fight against the legitimate government of Syria. Since then, media reports point to arms and funds flowing from Saudi Arabia to mercenaries and groups including Daesh (also known as ISIS/ISIL).

Who is Canada?

Take away Canada’s friendly public relations campaign and the honeymoon of a new Prime Minister, and Canada is what it is. That is, an imperialist country with a foreign policy driven by capitalist interests. In it’s arms deal with Saudi Arabia, the government of Canada



Bill C-51 One Year Later: **JUSTIN TRUDEAU, DON'T KILL TIME, KILL BILL C-51!**

By Thomas Davies

June 18, 2016 will mark one year since the status of human and democratic rights in Canada took a dramatic turn for the worse. On that day the infamous “Police State” Bill C-51 officially became law. Since Justin Trudeau and the Liberals voted in favour of the Bill, have now held a majority government for more than half of its existence, and have been issuing directives to the police, secret police and government agencies on how to implement its broad powers – the dubious ownership of Bill C-51 now belongs just as much to them as it does to Stephen Harper and the Conservatives.

Government agencies, the RCMP and CSIS have all admitted to using Bill C-51's new powers on an ongoing basis, but have refused to explain how they are using them. Under Bill C-51, they don't have to. The Liberal government's directives to them on how to implement Bill C-51 have also been kept a secret.

Dangerous Period

As the days, months, and now a year goes by there is a real danger that we become used to this situation. That we become used to 17 different government agencies sharing our personal and private information amongst themselves, used to spy agencies having undefined powers of “disruption” and the RCMP using powers of arbitrary detention, used to Federal Judges secretly pre-authorizing violations of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom or lawbreaking, used to language of so-called “Anti-Terrorism” legislation so vague it means that anyone even voicing an opinion in contradiction to the governments could be targeted. This is no exaggeration, and this isn't even a complete list of the injustices of Bill C-51 which have all been outlined by organizations like the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), the Canadian Bar Association, the United Nations Working Group on Human Rights, among many others.



These are violations of our basic human rights that no one should get used to.

Another danger is that we become fooled that possible alterations to Bill C-51 currently being discussed by the Liberals will change its nature as an unsafe, unnecessary law which violates our basic human rights. Minister of Public Safety Ralph Goodale said recently in an interview with CBC that he “hopes” that a national security review committee is created before parliament



adjourns for the summer in four weeks, that the government will be “consulting” with people in Canada during the summer, and that they will be proposing amendments to Bill C-51 in the next parliamentary session. It is significant that they feel pressured to present these changes, but Bill C-51 should have never existed in the first place.

Creation of Bill C-51

It is helpful to look back at the origins of Bill C-51 to help remember why repealing it is so necessary.

In October of 2014 there was both an attack on Parliament Hill in Ottawa which left one Canadian soldier and the shooter, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau dead. Two days

before, on October 20, Martin Couture-Rouleau deliberately rammed a car into a pair of Canadian Armed Forces soldiers in Quebec. Both died. Zehaf-Bibeau and Couture-Rouleau were both recent converts to Islam and both were also in obvious need of psychological assistance.

The Conservatives and Stephen Harper wasted no time in taking advantage of the crisis, pushing forward new “anti-terrorism” legislation which granted CSIS more power for spying on Internet use inside and outside of Canada and protecting the anonymity of its informants. They also announced that Canada's national security strategy was no longer sufficient and they were quickly moving forward with further anti-terrorism legislation.

In a country where laws or amendments often take years to create and to pass, Bill C-51 was rushed into and through parliament a few months later. In announcing the new legislation at a campaign style rally Stephen Harper said, “Violent jihadism is not just a danger somewhere else...It seeks to harm us here in Canada — in our cities and in our neighbourhoods, through horrific acts... We are targeted by these terrorists for no other reason than that we are Canadians. They want to harm us because they hate our society and the values it represents.”

With months to go before calling a Federal Election, the Conservatives saw what they thought was a perfect opportunity to capitalize on the fear created by the two terrorist attacks to advance legislation severely limiting the right to dissent in Canada, as well as putting their party in what they hoped would be a strong position going into the election.

Unfortunately for them, it backfired. After some initial confusion protests sprung up all around Canada as every major legal, civil rights, human rights and press organization denounced the Bill. In February 2015, an Angus Reid poll had found that support for the bill was at 82 per cent. By early March according to Forum Research it was down to 45 per cent, and at the end of March it had





plummeted to 33 per cent.

Importantly, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association revealed, “Although we asked the government repeatedly, not once did we receive specifics on how any part of C-51 could have prevented the attacks of 2014, or on why pre-existing legislation was insufficient to protect us.” There were already 14 “anti-terror” provisions in the Canadian Criminal code before C-51.

Oversight, Amendments, Consultation – Aren’t These a Step Forward?

We have detailed at length in the pages of *Fire This Time* the specific limitations and failures of each of the proposed Liberal initiatives in regards to Bill C-51. How the experience of countries like the US and UK demonstrate that a parliamentary oversight committee guarantees nothing, how potential Liberal amendments would still leave in place huge human rights violations and how the public consultation has yet to be defined and will surely have nothing in place obligating the government to follow through with anything they have heard. The list goes on.

But the most important thing to focus on is: Why do we need to discuss these things in the first place? The government on Canada, under both the Conservatives and the Liberals, has yet to make a real case for why Bill C-51 needs to exist. The CCLA outlined how the Conservatives failed and/or refused to explain how Bill C-51 makes anyone anywhere any safer. The Liberals have also refused to try and convince people of the public safety necessity of Bill C-51.

So what’s the basis for taking away our rights?

We can’t forget that the Conservatives also made some amendments to Bill C-51 to try and confuse and derail the movement against it. The move failed because people understood that the 62 page law had nothing to do with national security and

public safety and everything to do with political opportunism and silencing dissent. The Liberals have not done any better.

These initiatives are all like someone trying to sell you a broken-down house by promising to put on a nice looking coat of paint and do some yardwork. It doesn’t change the fact that the foundation is rotten and unlivable.

What’s a Life Without Human Rights?

On May 24, a Federal Court judge found the Canadian government’s designation of Mahmoud Jaballah as a threat to national security unreasonable, and ordered that the security certificate against him should be removed. This is the third time a court has ruled in his favour. For 16 years Mr. Jaballah has been alternately imprisoned in maximum-security settings, put in solitary confinement, put under house arrest, spied on and separated from his family. Under “security certificates”, the Canadian government can detain and deport permanent residents or foreign nationals considered to be a security threat using secret evidence that the accused is not allowed to see. Four other Muslim men known as “the Secret Trial 5” have all undergone the same horror as well. None have been convicted of any terrorism-related charges. All were detained under Liberal governments and their conditions were continued under Conservative ones.

Sixteen years of intense injustice in the name of “national security”. There is no apology that will give Mr. Jaballah those years back, that can compensate for the time without family and freedoms. Under Bill C-51’s massive new scope how many more stories of

injustice and rights violations will we hear about years after its too late. How many will we not hear about because they were blanketed in secrecy?

The Way Forward

It’s possible that the Liberals will continue to delay and side-step the issue of Bill C-51. It looks more likely that they will feel obligated to move on their promises in an attempt to slow down opposition. Either way, our job remains the same: Continue to take public action demanding the immediate repeal of Bill C-51, and continuing to explain to people why anything less would be a travesty against our human rights. The Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 has organized 65 consecutive weekly actions in Vancouver against Bill C-51, and will continue to organize until the law is scrapped in its entirety. Groups and individuals around Canada know that we have huge public backing against Bill C-51 and must continue to organize to, “REPEAL BILL C-51 NOW!”

*Follow Thomas Davies on Twitter:
@thomasdavies59*



REVOLUTION IS THE MOTHER OF CHANGE

*By Manuel Yepe**

Louis A. Pérez Jr., historian and professor from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, the United States, is the author of a number of important books about Cuban national identity. He has published an interesting essay that delves into the meaning of the present links between Cuba and the United States. The title may confuse many about its content: Visit Cuba before it changes!

"There has been something of an implacable tenacity with which the United States has pursued change in Cuba, a single-minded resolve over the course of 55 years: one armed invasion, scores of assassination plots, years of covert operations, and decades of punitive economic sanctions. An embargo –"harsher than toward any other country in the world," as Assistant Secretary of State Roberta Jacobson acknowledged in 2015– designed with malice aforethought: to inflict adversity upon the Cuban people, to deepen Cuban discontent through economic privation, in the hope that such hardship would act to bestir the Cuban people to rise up and, in one fell swoop, bring about the overthrow of the Cuban government."

This is how Professor Perez summarizes the tragic history of aggression and humiliation endured by the Cuban people because of their firm decision to carry out their project of independence and socialist change.

When the Cuban revolution had barely begun (although it had already produced impressive and universally-applauded popular benefits such as land reform and literacy throughout its people), Washington declared that tourism to Cuba was contrary to the foreign policy and national interests of the United States. Travel to Cuba was thus forbidden by law for all US citizens as part of a cruel policy of hostility.

It is known –because surveys indicate– that most US citizens wanted and still want friendly relations with Cuba despite the poison that the US mass media has been injecting for more than half a century.

Regrettably, not all Americans base their

thinking on the fact that these policies violate basic principles of international law and basic norms of human coexistence. There are many people who only see the issue from the point of view of what befits the corporations that, as a result of many years of media manipulation, are considered the reason and symbol of the US nation.

The merit of the Obama administration has been in recognizing the failure of the policy pursued by their country for more than half a century. The United States had insisted on political change in Cuba as a precondition for the establishment of normal diplomatic relations.

Near the end of his term, Obama turned this policy on its head, proposed normal diplomatic

term Washington uses to mean the capitalist system) among Cubans, the Cubans took that purpose as an opportunity to show visitors that the defamatory campaign, that US corporate media have been waging at global scale against Cuba for more than half a century, was false.

The distance between the manipulations of the campaign and the truth is so great that from the first minute of contact with Cuban reality, US visitors –as a rule– are open to understanding the reasons that led to the historic popular achievement that is the Cuban revolution. At the same time, they see the senselessness of U.S. government's policy of hostility against the small island nation.

Lies crashing against evidence eventually awakened a strong current of attraction to the Cuban revolution's process of independence and social justice.

It seems that the new US policy against Cuba is to increase contacts with the Cuban people, support what Washington means by civil society in Cuba, and so to disrupt the interaction between Cubans and their local authorities. All this is based on obvious neo-liberal goals of dividing the people from the state and encouraging the development of a capitalist class on the island.

Cuba, meanwhile, will continue in its revolutionary determination to change what needs to be changed, seizing opportunities, but avoiding traps. Revolution is the mother of change!

** Manuel E. Yepe is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He is a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.*

*www.englishmanuelyepe.wordpress.com
A CubaNews translation.
Edited by Walter Lippman.
www.walterlippmann.com*



Obama in Havana, with revolutionary hero Che Guevara's Mural overlooking the Revolution Square during a ceremony at the José Martí Monument

relations as an initial step; revitalized the system of selective authorization for "people-to-people" travel; modified regulations; softened controls and relaxed restrictions in order to expand the categories of authorized travel to Cuba. He declared himself powerless against the blockade, but urged Congress to lift it.

"Through engagement we have a better chance of bringing about change than we would have otherwise," said President Obama to justify the modification of his policy towards Cuba. "US presence in Cuba would serve to spread among the Cuban people the values of the United States."

Cuba accepted the challenge posed by Washington's "people-to-people" policy because, despite its stated intention that the visitors would promote "democracy" (the

Por Manuel Yepe*

Louis A. Pérez Jr, sociólogo y profesor de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte en Chapel Hill, Estados Unidos, y autor de importantes libros acerca de la identidad nacional cubana, ha publicado un interesante ensayo en el que hurga en el significado de momento actual de los vínculos entre Cuba y Estados Unidos. El título puede confundir a muchos acerca del contenido: ¡Visite Cuba antes de que cambie! “Con implacable tenacidad Estados Unidos se ha propuesto conseguir el cambio en Cuba. Ha sido una determinación con carácter de fijación en el transcurso de cincuenta y cinco años: una invasión armada, veintenas de complots de asesinato, años de operaciones encubiertas y decenios de sanciones económicas punitivas. Un embargo más duro que el impuesto a cualquier otro país del mundo, según lo admitiera la secretaria de Estado adjunta Roberta Jacobson en 2015. Todo diseñado para infligirle adversidad al pueblo cubano y profundizar el descontento mediante la privación económica, con la esperanza de que las penalidades obren en el sentido de incitar al pueblo cubano a rebelarse para que, en una arremetida, precipite el derrocamiento del gobierno cubano.”

Así resume el profesor Pérez la trágica historia de agresiones y vejaciones que ha soportado el pueblo cubano por su firme decisión de llevar a cabo su proyecto de cambio independentista y socialista. Cuando la revolución cubana apenas se iniciaba (aunque ya había producido impresionantes conquistas populares aplaudidas

universalmente, como la reforma agraria y la alfabetización de todo el pueblo), Washington declaró que el turismo a Cuba era contrario a la política exterior y los intereses nacionales de Estados Unidos. Los viajes a Cuba quedaron así vedados por ley para todos los

estadounidenses como parte de una cruel política de hostilidad. Se conoce, porque las encuestas así lo indican, que la mayoría de los ciudadanos estadounidenses deseaban y siguen queriendo relaciones de amistad con Cuba no obstante el veneno que durante mas de medio siglo les han estado inyectando los medios masivos.

Lo lamentable es que no todos los norteamericanos basan sus criterios en el hecho de que esas políticas violan principios básicos del derecho internacional y normas elementales de convivencia humana. Son muchos los que sólo ven el asunto desde el punto de vista de lo que conviene a las

LA REVOLUCION ES LA MADRE DE LOS CAMBIOS



El presidente cubano Raúl Castro y el presidente Obama en un afiche en Habana antes de su visita a Cuba

corporaciones que, por efecto de muchos años de manipulación mediática, son consideradas la razón y el símbolo de la nación estadounidense.

El mérito del gobierno de Barack Obama ha estado en haber reconocido el fracaso de la política seguida por su país durante más de medio siglo. Estados Unidos había insistido en el cambio político en Cuba como precondition al establecimiento de relaciones diplomáticas normales. Próximo el final de su mandato, Obama viró esa política de cabeza, propuso relaciones diplomáticas normales como paso inicial; reanimó el sistema de autorizaciones selectivas “pueblo a pueblo”; modificó regulaciones; suavizó controles y relajó restricciones para ampliar los viajes autorizados a Cuba. Se declaró impotente contra el bloqueo, pero exhortó al Congreso a levantarlo.

“Mediante el compromiso, tenemos una mayor oportunidad de inducir cambios que por otros medios” declaró el Presidente para justificar el reajuste de su política hacia Cuba. “La presencia estadounidense en Cuba serviría para difundir en el pueblo cubano los valores de Estados Unidos”.

Cuba había aceptado el reto que suponía la política “pueblo a pueblo” de Washington porque, no obstante su declarada intención de que los visitantes promovieran entre los cubanos la “democracia” (término con que Washington designa al sistema capitalista), los cubanos apreciaban tal propósito como oportunidad para demostrar a los visitantes las falsedades de la campaña difamatoria que desde hacía más de medio siglo libraban a escala global los medios corporativos de

Estados Unidos contra Cuba.

La distancia que media entre las manipulaciones de esa campaña y la verdad es tan grande que desde el primer minuto de contacto con la realidad, los visitantes – como regla– se abren al entendimiento de las razones que dieron lugar a la histórica hazaña popular que es la revolución cubana y la sinrazón de la política de hostilidad de su gobierno contra el pequeño país insular.

Las mentiras, al chocar contra las evidencias, acabaron por despertar una fuerte corriente de atracción hacia el proceso independentista y de justicia social que es la revolución cubana.

Todo parece indicar que la nueva política estadounidense contra Cuba consiste en incrementar los contactos con el pueblo cubano, apoyar lo que ellos entienden por sociedad civil en Cuba y romper la interacción entre los cubanos y sus autoridades populares. Todo ello partiendo de claros fines neoliberales de separar al pueblo del Estado y fomentar el desarrollo de una clase capitalista en la isla.

Cuba, por su parte, seguirá en su empeño revolucionario de cambiar lo que tenga que cambiarse, aprovechando oportunidades, pero evitando trampas. ¡La revolución es la madre de los cambios!

** Manuel E. Yepe Menendez es periodista y se desempeña como Profesor adjunto en el Instituto Superior de las Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana.*

www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com

Attawapiskat & Fort McMurray: 2 CANADIAN CRISES, 2 UNEQUAL RESPONSES

By Tamara Hansen

Last week I read a Huffington Post headline: “Attawapiskat And Fort McMurray Prove Not All Crises Are Seen As Equal”. I thought, ‘Wow I want to write an article with that title!’ Of course, I could not just take the headline of award-winning journalist Nick Fillmore, but I will borrow some of his research and points in order to build and develop a working class case.

Attawapiskat & Fort McMurray: 2 Crises

Since the beginning of this year I have been writing articles for Fire This Time Newspaper with a strong focus on the challenges facing Indigenous people in Canada today, including my article in our last issue, “Have you heard of Attawapiskat?” (FTT V10I5). Attawapiskat is an Indigenous community of about 1,800 people in the James Bay region in Ontario, Canada. The current crisis in Attawapiskat, that has garnered national headlines, is an epidemic of youth attempting to take their own lives. In April 2016 the community of Attawapiskat declared a state of emergency after 11 people attempted to take their own lives in one night, 28 people had also tried in the month of March. However this is not the first time this community has faced major challenges. In fact, in the last 10 years, this small community has had to declare 5 different states of emergency: the water crisis, the sewage crisis, the housing crisis, the flooding crisis, and now, most recently, the youth suicide crisis. Unfortunately the native youth suicide epidemic is also not limited to Attawapiskat; in the last three months at least 3 First Nations communities in Canada have declared a ‘state of emergency’ due to horrifyingly high numbers of suicides and attempted suicides. In a CBC article from April 16, 2016 a fourth Indigenous community, Neskantaga First Nation in northern Ontario, reminded Canada that it has been under a ‘state of emergency’ for 3 years due to high levels of suicide. The chief, Wayne Moonias, refuses to stop sounding the alarm until the root causes of the crisis are addressed.

While these states of emergencies have been declared, we heard about another tragedy happening in Canada. In the first week of May 2016, over 88,000 people were forced to flee their homes in Fort McMurray in Alberta, Canada as forest fires had engulfed much of their community. According to a 2015 Wood Buffalo municipal census (Fort McMurray is part of the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo) the region counts 125,032 inhabitants. It has been estimated that about 1 in 5 homes in Fort McMurray were destroyed by the fires last month and many still have not been able to return to their still-standing homes due to the toxic ash covering the area. Remarkably, no one died in the fires in Fort McMurray, although two people were unfortunately killed in a road accident while evacuating the town.

Both McMurray and Attawapiskat represent real tragedies for the people of Canada. Both communities deserve our help, support and solidarity in their time of need. However, the response to these two tragedies has been markedly different, especially by governments. Also the causes of these two crises are quite different: one is Mother Nature and the other, I would argue, is the longstanding racist policies of the government of Canada.

Attawapiskat & Fort McMurray: 2 unequal government responses

In his aforementioned article in the Huffington Post, Nick Fillmore explains his perspective: “By the time Fort McMurray is rebuilt, it’s likely that governments will have spent \$2 billion or more. Donations from Canadians will reach into the millions. And a representative of one of the big insurance companies estimated they will be required to pay as much as \$9 billion to restore homes and businesses. I have no quarrel with anything that is being done to help the



Attawapiskat residents take part in a candlelight vigil on April 15, 2016 to draw attention to the 100 suicide attempts in their community

people and community of Fort McMurray. The destruction and emotional distress suffered by residents is taking a heavy toll. Like thousands of other folks, I have made a financial contribution. What I do object to is that, in comparison, the federal and Ontario governments are doing practically nothing and spending a pittance to alleviate the suicide crisis in Attawapiskat, a poverty-stricken, isolated community of 2,000 located 720 kilometres north of SudSbury.”

Before the fires were even put out in Fort McMurray the Red Cross, private companies and governments were already pitching in to help those who had lost everything. People across Canada saw the emergency on the news and social media and were quickly given websites and phone numbers to call to make a donation towards the cause.

Headlines in mainstream media reported on the incoming support:

- “Help floods in after massive blaze engulfs Fort McMurray”
- “‘Most important cash transfer’ in Red Cross history: \$600 per adult, \$300 per child. Province also making pre-loaded debit cards with \$1,250 per adult and \$500 per child available today”
- “South African firefighters arrive eager to help fight Fort McMurray wildfire”
- “Red Cross to help pay for Fort McMurray residents to return home. Another \$40 million has been set

aside to cover transportation and resettlement costs for evacuees”

Headlines in mainstream media on Attawapiskat in comparison:

- “A First Nations cry for help gets little government attention: Star investigation”
- “Federal government under fire as Attawapiskat suicide crisis continues”
- “Justin Trudeau to meet Attawapiskat chief in wake of more suicide attempts”
- “Canada poised to embrace UN Indigenous rights declaration even as it remains under fire for Attawapiskat”
- “New mental health workers for Attawapiskat”

That last headline is from May 12, 2016, interestingly Health Canada could not actually say when the new health workers would be “on the ground” in Attawapiskat and do you know how many mental health workers they plan to send? According to the article, “two additional mental health workers and a case manager for youth in Attawapiskat.” So even the good news, is minimal news.

Going back to Nick Fillmore’s article, he explains, “In April, federal Minister of Indigenous Affairs Carolyn Bennett made a trip to Attawapiskat and promised funding for a new youth centre and some programming for young people. In addition, a youth delegation from the region will be invited to visit Ottawa. The Ontario government has pledged \$2 million over the next two years for health support and a youth centre for the community.” He continues, “Where is the empathy in those kinds of promises? A lack of money is not the problem. The federal government is sitting on about \$4 billion to be used to improve lives, particularly education facilities, on reserves. What is hard

to understand is why the federal government isn’t dipping into its stashed-away billions to assist First Nations communities such as Attawapiskat.”

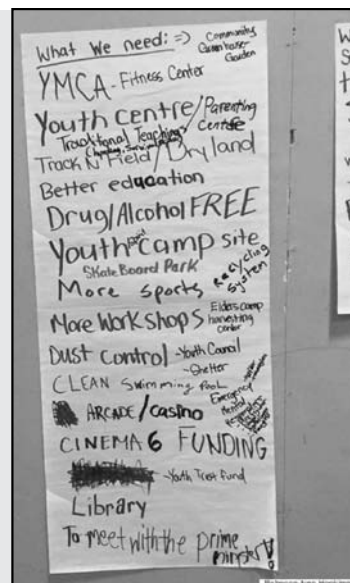
There was no national Red Cross campaign, no new money promised, just the repetition that the new Liberal budget is the best budget in recent memory for native people – \$8.4 billion over 5 years. But remember, as I mentioned in previous articles, much of this money comes in to play the last 2-3 years, not immediately. Besides 5 years from now there will have already been another election, so all of the money promised after the 4 year mark is a magician’s money trick that may or may not ever show up for Aboriginal people in Canada.

At the same time, there were plenty of shortcomings in Fort McMurray too. Other countries offered to help fight the fires, such as Russia, but were turned away by the government of Canada. Also, the mandatory evacuation notice was left very late and traffic was disorganized, endangering the lives of many as we have seen from the videos posted online of people fleeing their community. So I am not arguing that Fort McMurray has had it easy or was perfectly handled by the governments of Alberta and Canada. But I am saying the support has been structured, well-funded and tremendous.

Negligence, Ignorance and Hypocrisy for Hundreds of Years

On May 6, the Canadian Press published an article stating, “Premier Rachel Notley says cabinet has approved a payment of \$1,250 per adult and \$500 per dependent at a cost to the province of \$100 million.” According to a CBC article published on May 11, \$67 million was donated to the Red Cross by people across Canada to Fort McMurray, as the headline mentioned above said, it totals \$600 per adult and \$300 per child. Additionally the CBC article explained, “more than 700 Red Cross staff and trained volunteers from across Canada are in Alberta to help evacuees at shelters, with registration, family reunification and to help meet urgent, basic needs.” On May 23, 2016 the Red Cross announced it has now received a total of \$100 million in donations.

Interestingly, Attawapiskat even donated \$5000 to the Red Cross for Fort McMurray. The community held a fundraising



Youth in Attawapiskat brainstorm about their community needs

campaign, looking past their own tragedies to try to help others. This was a heartwarming gesture and teaches us about the generosity of people living in Attawapiskat.

This is also not to say that people across Canada have ignored the plight of Attawapiskat, tones of schools and community groups have written letters with positive messages to youth in Attawapiskat. Ottawa students are sending essential library items to the community, Sudbury students and school staff are hosting a ‘Walk for Attawapiskat’, and a Toronto high school is organizing a week-long soccer camp in Attawapiskat

this summer, to mention a few examples.

However I keep coming back to the title of Nick Fillmore’s article, “Attawapiskat And Fort McMurray Prove Not All Crises Are Seen As Equal.” Why did this title grab my heart? Because while I do not agree with all of his points, fundamentally the story is the same, there is a racist double-standard in Canada, especially when it comes to Indigenous people. Of course, I see the government of Canada as the main force creating and implementing laws and policies that have helped to justify this double-standard. However, non-Indigenous people in Canada also need to recognize their prejudices and wilful blindness to the challenges facing Indigenous communities in Canada today.

The government of Canada has finally signed on to the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples – this document makes a lot of promises to Indigenous people around the world about respect, rights and self-determination. It is up to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to stand together to demand the government of Canada respect the Indigenous people of this land and their right to determine their own future, their right of self-determination.

It is not time for people in Canada to dump humanitarian aid on Attawapiskat, or to heap a bunch of money onto Indigenous communities. It is time for people in Canada to listen, to really hear what Indigenous communities are asking for and to ask them what form our solidarity and support should take. It is only when Indigenous people have control over their own communities and future that they will be able to overcome.

Follow Tamara Hansen on Twitter:

@THans01



A devastating photograph documenting human tragedy has once again brought the refugee crisis in Europe to front page news. In this photograph hundreds of refugees are seen frantically clinging to a capsizing boat turned almost completely to one side, some of them jumping from the boat to join others already struggling to stay afloat in the water.

It is impossible to know exactly how many

their asylum claims decided in Greece or be deported to Turkey.

As the refugee crisis continues, there are also more and more closed borders and razor-wire fences as European countries remain divided on how to best control the mass exodus of refugees from the Middle East and Africa. Austria is only the latest country threatening to build a fence and severely limit the movement of refugees, following the lead of Hungary, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, and

being separated during their transfer.”

Further to the North, at the refugee camp in Calais, France known as “the Jungle” conditions are no better. The camp, which is home to between 4,000-7,000 people, is even more crowded since the French government began to demolish sections at the end of February. According to a report released in April by the Refugee Rights Data Project, 76% of refugees in the Calais camp reported that they had experienced police violence,

Refugee Crisis in Europe: From Bad to Worse

Imperialists Are Gambling with the Lives of Millions of Refugees

refugees died on that boat, but the non-governmental organization Medecins Sans Frontiers (Doctors Without Borders) estimates that in just the final week of May, 900 refugees have lost their lives while attempting to cross through this deadly passage between Libya and Italy. May was the deadliest in the Mediterranean Sea since April, 2015.

In the past five months the refugee crisis in Europe that first began in the winter of 2015 has continued to deepen. Over 200,000 refugees seeking safety and a decent life have landed on European shores, fleeing wars, occupation and destruction in the Middle East and Africa. However, as borders close across Europe and new policies to control the movement of refugees are put into place, tens of thousands of people are stranded in sub-human conditions, stuck in a horrible limbo wondering where exactly are the human rights that Western governments profess around the world.

The Deepening Tragedy for Refugees

For most refugees that arrive through the Mediterranean Sea, a Greek or Italian island is the first place in Europe they encounter. Although it has been over one year since the refugee crisis began, the detention centres on the islands are still too small, and with too few resources, to process the asylum claims of refugees in a human and dignified way. This is especially true following the deal between Europe and Turkey, which now requires refugees that land in Greece either have



Refugee camp - Suruc, Şanlıurfa province - Turkey

Slovenia.

Beyond just preventing the safe travel of refugees from countries in Southern Europe to the North, the shut-down of borders has also created another humanitarian disaster for refugees. When Macedonia first closed its border with Greece and began allowing only limited numbers of just Syrian refugees through, an estimated 54,000 refugees were left stranded in Greece. Many of them ended up in a make-shift camp in Idomeni. Now, the Greek government has forcibly relocated 3,000 people from the camp to new sites with supposedly better living conditions. However, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has reported on these camps saying, “The air circulation is poor, and supplies of food, water, toilets, showers, and electricity are insufficient. Refugees transferred by bus from Idomeni received little information about conditions at the new sites and the duration of their stay there. UNHCR remains concerned about families

including physical violence, verbal abuse, tear gas and sexual violence and 77% reported that they had health issues from the conditions at the camp.

The Failure of European Refugee Policy

“We have come from war to be jailed like animals. Why?” These are the words of Ahmed Ali, a refugee from Afghanistan who is being detained on the Greek island of Moria awaiting a decision on his claim for asylum.

More than likely, after spending months detained in crowded conditions on the island, Ahmed will be denied his asylum claim as he is from Afghanistan, a country which European countries claim is safe enough for people to return. Both Britain and Germany have begun deporting people from Afghanistan back, despite the fact that 2015 was the deadliest year for civilians in Afghanistan since the U.S.-led invasion in 2001.

Ahmed’s unjust detention is part of a new agreement between the EU and Turkey, a plan which also includes the agreement that the EU will re-settle one Syrian asylum seeker directly from Turkey for every one Syrian refugee that lands in Greece and is deported to Turkey. Other provisions in the plan also allow for non-Syrian refugees to be deported to back to Turkey from Greece if and when their claim for asylum is denied.

One of the stated goals of this agreement is to decrease the number of refugees leaving Turkey for Greece. This was supposed to be

accomplished by providing deterrents for refugees, including NATO ship patrols in the Aegean Sea, increased interception of boats by Turkish authorities, as well as changes to the laws for applying for asylum in Europe. Since the agreement was put in place, refugees are either required to register as asylum seeker in Greece, or risk being deported back to Turkey. This new requirement can prevent a refugee from continuing North to build a new life in a country of their choice under current EU refugee policy.

Looking only at the number of refugees crossing from Turkey to Greece, the agreement appears to be working. The number of refugees crossing the Eastern passage of the Mediterranean from Turkey to Greece has decreased by 90% in the month of April as compared to the month of March, as reported by the European border agency Frontex. However, as an effective policy for dealing with the human catastrophe and the refugee crisis as a whole, this agreement has absolutely failed.

In the first month of its operation only 400 refugees were returned to Turkey from Greece. In this same period only 177 Syrian refugees were re-settled from Turkey to Europe. Even with the decreased number of arrivals, nearly 5,000 refugees still landed in Greece in the months of April and May (International Organization for Migration), not to mention the 30,000 more refugees that arrived in Italy. This means that not even one refugee was resettled for every 90 that landed in Europe. And so the refugee crisis deepens and the condition for refugees in Europe worsens.

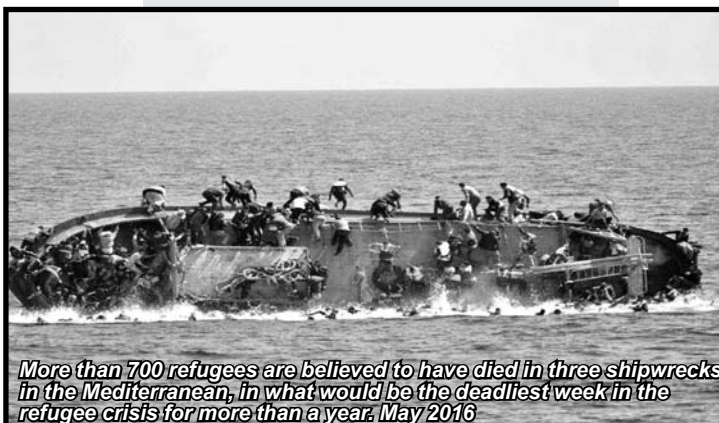
The legality of the EU-Turkey agreement has also been challenged by human rights groups with regard to its compliance with international law, including the United Nations 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and well as existing law in the EU in regards to the detention and deportation of refugees. Additionally there more questions regarding whether or not Turkey can be considered a “safe-country,” which stands as a criteria for the legality of deportations there.

Beyond these questions of legality, which will continue to be debated in the coming months there is also the simple human question of the right of refugees to seek a place to be safe and a dignified life. For refugees in Turkey, over 2.7 million of which are from Syria, life in Turkey is not an option. As the United Nations Children's Agency, UNICEF has reported, nearly 80% of Syrian children living as refugees in Turkey are not at school, most

of them forced to work instead for the survival of their families.

Whether through shutting down borders, putting up fences, signing agreements or, as in Germany and Denmark, passing laws that legalize the confiscation of the assets of refugees, it is clear that the Europe's response to the refugee crisis has done nothing to end the violence and humiliation faced by refugees. Europe has provided no safe way for refugees to flee their lives of devastation and war in the Middle East and Africa and has instead left them in the hands of smugglers, forced to give up their savings, possessions, and dignity, if not their lives.

Who is Responsible for the Refugee Crisis?



Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and European Council President Donald Tusk



It has now been over one year since the refugee crisis began in Europe. In total more than 1.2 million people have fled from the Middle East and Africa to Europe, only a small percentage of the 10's of millions of refugees displaced from their home countries, but not yet displaced from refugee camps in the region.

With all of the discussions between leaders in Europe and the U.S. and Canada, there still seems to be one thing missing from the conversation, who, exactly is responsible for the this crisis for humanity?

For Greek journalist, Kostas Kallergis, this question was not a difficult one to answer. In

an interview with the Status Audio Journal, he simply said “War and insecurity in these countries is the single most important reason why these people decide to leave their houses and their homes, or even the refugee camps close to their homes.”

If war and insecurity is the reason that people are fleeing for their lives, then the responsibility for the crisis must lie with those that have brought so much war, occupation and destruction to the Middle East and Africa – governments like the United States, the U.K., Canada, France and their imperialist allies.

The refusal of European and the U.S. and Canadian governments to accept responsibility for the refugee crisis brings to mind the saying about elephant in the room that everyone can see, but non one is talking about, only this time the elephant that everyone is ignoring is a 250 kilogram BLU-126 bomb used by the French in their assault on Syria.

The Destruction of Libya and the Refugee Crisis

The role of the country of Libya is one example of the fatal relationship between the death and destruction caused by imperialist war and occupation and the refugee crisis.

Beginning in March of 2011, the United States, Canada, France and NATO began dropping bombs on the North African country of Libya under the pretext of supporting a force of “rebels” against a brutal dictator. Within seven months the Western forces had flown over 26,000 bombing sorties, and assassinated the President of Libya, Muammar Ghaddafi. Libya was left in ruins, with over 2.5million people in need of humanitarian assistance and “Shortages of food, fuel, water, medical supplies and electricity, as well as reduced access to health care and public services . . .,” as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The situation has not improved for people in Libya since the imperialist bombing campaign ended. Today, Libya remains a country in complete chaos. Out of this chaos the terrorist organization Daesh has also grown in Libya, giving the U.S. justification, not only to drop more bombs in Libya in February of this year, but also to justify the covert operations and threats of further intervention by the United States and their allies that have begun. Understood in this light, the motivation behind Prime Minister David Cameron's recent proposal that the Britain send a 5th warship to the Mediterranean Sea in order to stop refugee boats is also clearer.

It is also apparent that leaders in Europe are worried that the Mediterranean Sea route from Libya to Italy is going to begin to bring more and more refugees to Europe. Both the president of the European council, Donald Tusk, warning that that “‘alarming’ numbers of potential migrants were gathering in Libya,” and French President Francois Hollande warning that “a new wave of migrants could try to move ‘through Malta, Italy and, eventually, once again, through Germany and France’” have expressed this apprehension.

Mass media has also joined this latest imperialist offensive against Libya and refugees coming to Europe from Libya. While reading a CNN article on the recent drowning of hundreds of refugees in the Mediterranean Sea, another video about refugees, also from CNN, appeared within the article. Far from being sympathetic to refugees this video was instead meant to make people afraid of refugees, especially those from Libya. It was titled “ISIS infiltrates the migrant route in Libya” and went on to say

“Smuggling Jihadis to Europe” and “the West is doing next to nothing about it.” The video was short, but to the point in its propagation of fear-mongering and Islamophobia against refugees.

Can Europe End the Refugee Crisis?

Looking back at the past year of failed European government response to the refugee crisis, someone might even wonder if European governments are at all interested in ending the refugee crisis. It is certainly clear that they are not interested in ending it in a way that refugees are given their guaranteed rights, or even treated as dignified human beings.

What European governments are interested in doing is controlling the flow of refugees to and through Europe, not stopping it all together. In fact, more than this, the main objective of Europe refugee policy has been to contain the refugee crisis to within the regional borders of the Middle East and Africa.

When the refugee crisis first began, Europe was caught by surprise. Suddenly the tens of thousands of refugees had arrived on the doorstep of those that had made their homes and countries un-livable. Refugees whose lives were destroyed by the imperialist wars, occupations and covert and overt interventions in the Middle East and Africa that

are part of the new era of war and occupation which began with the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

In the face of the refugee crisis, some countries, like Germany, responded quickly, seeing in refugees a way to fill low-paying jobs or bring up declining birth rates. Other countries shut their doors almost immediately. However, no matter which country in Europe, the U.S. or Canada, it is clear that the ruling class does not want millions upon millions of refugees to leave the Middle East and Africa and come to Europe for safety, instead they want to be able to control the movement of refugees in a way that is beneficial to their criminal interests.

Imperialist governments, led by the U.S. have a long-term plan for the people of the Middle East and Africa - more war and occupation and bloodshed. This means that in order to be successful in carrying out their plans, they want people in North Africa and the Middle East to get used to living in destruction and misery, used to survival in failed states, perpetual war and chaos.

Furthermore they are also working to maintain control over the refugees that have already entered Europe. This is one of the objectives of the campaign of Islamophobia and racism, to keep refugees too afraid to stand up for their rights and to keep people in Europe too divided to join with refugees and fight for the rights of all poor, working and oppressed people.

Open the Borders! Stop War and Occupation! Not refugees!

In contrast to the European ‘solution’ to the refugee crisis, there is another solution, and one that will not only lessen the immense human suffering, but end it entirely.

As long as there are wars and occupations in the Middle East and Africa, there will be refugees fleeing for somewhere safe to be. To put an immediate end to the needless deaths in the Mediterranean Sea and along other parts of a refugees dangerous journey, the borders must be opened. To put an end to the human misery, family separations, lack of access to housing, food, water, refugees must be granted their full legal and human rights instantly.

To finally put an end to the refugee crisis, imperialist wars and occupations in the Middle East and Africa must also be ended. This is the only permanent solution to this crisis for humanity.

Here in Canada, we also demand that the Canadian government take responsibility for its role in destroying the lives of people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen. This starts going well beyond the 25,000 Syrian refugees recently settled in Canada, and further then the 10,000 refugees that the Liberal Government has promised to accept. We demand that the government of Canada re-settle an additional 175,000 refugees in Canada this year, including Syrian and non-Syrian refugees.

Open the Borders Now!

No to War and Occupation!

Follow Alison Bodine on Twitter:
@Alisoncolette



German activists protest E.U. deal with Turkey to deport refugees. April 4 2016



People in Athens protest a second group of refugees being sent back from Greece to Turkey as part of the EU Turkey deal to reduce the numbers of migrants



Children hold placards as refugees in the port of Chios, Greece, stage a new protest against the inhuman E.U. deal with Turkey to deport refugees in April.

FREE CHELSEA MANNING!

SOLDIER OF HUMANITY



By Azza Rojbi

Chelsea Manning is a young former intelligence analyst and U.S. soldier currently serving a 35-year military prison sentence. Chelsea is accused of leaking over 260,000 classified United States diplomatic

6 Year anniversary since the unjust arrest and confinement of WikiLeaks whistleblower Chelsea Manning.

cables, as well as videos and documents which have become known as the Afghan War Diary and the Iraq War Logs. Published on the whistleblower site Wikileaks, they further exposed US war crimes in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world including mass killings, torture, corruption, and the government's web of lies and attempted cover-up of United States atrocities. May 27, 2016 marked six years since whistleblower Chelsea Manning was put in military custody for telling the truth and acting upon her conscience. Chelsea was also held in solitary confinement for the first 10 months of her incarceration. Despite the tremendous hardship of enduring a 35-year prison sentence, Manning has continued to speak out against injustice. She is an outspoken fighter for

social justice, an advocate for queer and trans rights and transparency in government and a frequent contributor to The Guardian Newspaper.

Chelsea is currently appealing, at the U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals, her unjust conviction and 35-year jail sentence under the Espionage Act. You can help raise money for her legal expenses by donating at: www.chelseamanning.org/donateappeal

For more information and to join the campaign for the freedom of Private Chelsea Manning please visit:

*www.chelseamanning.org
www.marvancouver.org*

Why I Keep Fighting

By Chelsea E Manning

On Monday May 9th, Chelsea Manning received the 2016 Blueprint Enduring Impact Whistleblowing Prize for her courage and heroic actions. The Blueprint Whistleblowing Prize is awarded annually to whistleblowers in recognition of their: bravery, integrity, commitment to the public interest and positive and enduring impact. Chelsea's friend Aaron Kirkhouse accepted the award on her behalf and read a speech prepared by her:

Good evening from sunny Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

I wish I could be there to accept this award in person, but since I cannot, I am delighted to have Aaron Kirkhouse accept it on my behalf.

As you know, I am held in an American military prison with only a small library and without access to the internet. In this time of rapid technological advances in social networking and the machine learning age, it's quite an odd predicament to find myself in.

Today, when once obscure online refrains are now finding their way into the global lexicon—"pics or it didn't happen"—it's easy to feel disconnected from a world exponentially intertwined and dependent on technology.

As a military prisoner, my public persona is carefully controlled and enforced. Any interviews or statements that I make—such

as this one—must be written or dictated through someone else who types it up on my behalf. I am not allowed to be recorded over the telephone, do any video interviews, or have any pictures taken—with the exception of the occasional grainy mug shot. For those living in my situation, it's easy to start feeling invisible—left behind and dismissed by the rest of a fast-paced society.

Despite these obstacles, I know I need to keep going. It is important to stay vocal. To stay creative. Active. Motivated. To keep fighting.

I keep fighting to survive and thrive. I am fighting my court-martial conviction and sentence before a military appeals court, starting this month. I am fighting to make the full investigation by the FBI public. I am fighting to grow my hair beyond the two inch male standards by the U.S. military.

I keep fighting to warn the world of the dangerous trend in which the only information you can access is the kind that someone with money or power wants you to see.

And, I keep fighting to let people know that they too can create change. By staying informed and educated, anyone can make a difference. You have the ability to fight for a better world for everyone—even for the most desperate, those at the bottom of the social ladder, refugees from conflict, queer and trans individuals, prisoners, and those born into poverty.

Thank you all so very much for your support over the years, and thank you to Lady Hollick, Mr. Davis, and Dr. Dreyfus for selecting me

to be the first person to receive this award. It is truly an amazing treat. I'm honored that my voice continues to be heard. Thank you for all for listening and choosing to fight alongside me. And of course, thank you to Aaron Kirkhouse for accepting this award for me.

I am grateful to you all—for being here tonight, and being there for me tomorrow. Think what we might accomplish if we do one thing—perhaps a grand undertaking or even what may seem to be a tiny, insignificant gesture—each day with the simple goal of making the world a better place.

Good night everyone =)

Reprinted from: www.chelseamanning.org



Aaron Kirkhouse accepts the 2016 Blueprint Enduring Impact Whistleblowing Prize on behalf of Chelsea Manning

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD RATIFIES KINDER MORGAN PIPELINE:

Why is this a set back for working people & the environment in Canada?

By Thomas Davies

It was an announcement that didn't surprise anyone – the National Energy Bureau (NEB) released a decision “conditionally” recommending the federal government approve Kinder-Morgan's 6.8 billion dollar Trans Mountain pipeline project. If built, the pipeline would “twin” an already existing pipeline to move heavy tar sands oil from Edmonton to Burnaby for export. Indigenous, environmental and community organizations, many of whom were shut out of the NEB process, have vowed to continue organizing to ensure the dangerous pipeline is not built.

Environmental Concerns Cannot Be Taken Lightly

More than 20 municipalities and 17 First Nations along the proposed expansion's route are in strong opposition to the project, and the majority of the 400 interveners and 1,250 commentators

who participated in the NEB hearings for the Trans Mountain expansion argued against it.

If built, the pipeline would triple the amount of oil being moved on the route to 890,000 barrels a day. This oil would cross approximately 900 watercourses between Edmonton and Burnaby. The pipeline would increase oil tanker traffic in the Burrard Inlet from 60 to more than 400 a year. These tankers would all have to navigate several narrow passages, three bridges, heavy boat traffic and strong currents before reaching more open waters

Kinder Morgan is a Texas-based oil company doesn't exactly have a stellar environmental record. According to a report by environmental advocacy group STAND, Kinder-Morgan has been responsible for least 1,800 oil and chemical spill violations since its incorporation in 1997. The more than \$2 million they have had to pay in

N Pipelines

international fines is certainly calculated as part of the “cost of doing business”.

Beyond that, Oil Change International modelled the North American pipeline and refinery system, and found that even without oil spills the Trans Mountain expansion would release as much as 163 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year. That's the equivalent of putting 34 million new cars on the road or operating 42 coal plants.

All this risk and damage for less than 100 predicted permanent jobs, and less than one percent of profits returned from corporate taxes? Just like the export of raw logs which devastated the industry, the heavy oil in the Trans Mountain pipeline would be primarily unrefined as well.

Is the NEB Really “Independent”?

While the NEB bills itself as an independent economic regulatory agency created to oversee “international and inter-provincial aspects of the oil, gas and electric utility industries” its many scandals have left many thinking otherwise.

- During the NEB review of the Trans Mountain pipeline it refused to consider a report from the National Academy of Sciences that found diluted bitumen sinks in water. It also refused to consider the effects of burning the heavy crude blend, which would account for 90 per cent of the project's global climate impact.

- Economist Robyn Allan quit the NEB hearings and wrote a scathing open letter stating, “the NEB has designed the scope of its review so narrowly, restricted participation so profoundly, and removed



essential features of quasi-judicial inquiry—such as cross-examination—so completely, that it pre-determines an outcome that favours Kinder Morgan and puts the rest of us at risk.”

- Recently the NEB also conditionally approved Enbridge’s Northern Gateway pipeline despite the nearly unanimous opposition of all presenters at the Board’s hearings. 1,159 of 1,179 submissions were opposed to the pipeline, including almost every expert witness.

- The “independent” NEB was forced to postpone the Kinder Morgan hearings when it was revealed that the Conservative government had appointed Steven Kelly, a consultant who actually worked for Kinder Morgan on the Trans Mountain pipeline file, to a seven year position on the NEB Board.

- This January the annual report from federal environment commissioner Julie Gelfand “concluded that the board did not adequately track companies’ implementation of pipeline approval conditions and that it was not consistently following up on company deficiencies.” The audit checked 49 cases and found 24 in which key documentation was missing, inaccurate or lacked an analysis or conclusion about whether conditions had been met.

Indigenous Self-Determination

It is worth repeating that British Columbia is almost entirely unseeded indigenous land, with no agreements between the government and indigenous nations allowing their territories to be used for resource extraction or transportation. The Federal Liberal government has also recently promised to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Article 32 of the UN Declaration reads:

“States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.”

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett has been avoiding addressing directly whether this would give veto power to indigenous nations regarding projects like the Trans Mountain pipeline, but there is no way



they are going to be able to present federal government approval of the pipeline in the face of opposition from 17 First Nations in Canada (as well as 4 just across the border in the United States) as “free and informed consent”.

The Tseil-Waututh nation has also already released its own report assessing the risks and damages of the Trans Mountain pipeline as part of its rejection of the pipeline being built on its territory.

The Bottom Line

Justin Trudeau has made the situation more complicated by announcing a second “parallel” panel of 3 people to gather information from the public and indigenous communities on the

Kinder Morgan proposal. The Liberals says it’s part of an effort to restore public trust in the review process, which was undermined under the previous Conservative government.

The government can commission all the new reviews it wants, but it won’t change the clear opposition of the indigenous nations whose land the pipeline would have to be built on.

It also won’t change the clear scientific fact that the building of any new pipeline to transport tar sands oil will make it impossible to meet the climate change emissions targets the Canadian government has already committed itself to. Climate change targets that many scientists say were not sufficient to begin with.

The opposition to the Trans Mountain pipeline isn’t just rooted in valid local concerns about the risks involved in its construction and operation, but in the larger questions of indigenous self-determination and the very real threat of climate change to our existence on this planet. The NEB is purposely out of touch with these realities and

once again the Liberal government is promising to please everyone at once.

As Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs said recently at community forum addressing the Trans Mountain pipeline, “This is not the time to be eloquent, or nice, or polite. This is the fight of our lifetime. It’s the fight of a generation. We have to be loud and proud. There have to be 10 times the number of people in the streets.” We agree. This is the time to come together to educate, organize and mobilize against Kinder-Morgan’s Trans Mountain pipeline.

*Follow Thomas Davies on Twitter:
@thomasdavies59*

Mass Movement in France Defies Hollande's Socialist Government Austerity Program



Demonstrators gather in Nantes, France to protest against the government's labour law reforms.

By Azza Rojbi

On May 26th, photos of thousands of protesters flooding the streets of Paris erupted on social media! It is estimated that 100,000 people took to the street in Paris, as workers went on a national strike against pro-business labour reform bill "Loi Travail" introduced by the Hollande socialist government. Rallies also took place in towns and cities across France, including Toulouse, Bordeaux and Nantes. This protest was the eighth national day of coordinated actions against this law within the last three months.

Hollande presented this labor reform proposal as a solution to a stagnating economy and a record high unemployment rate. When looked at closely it becomes clear that it is not more than a neo-liberal policy aimed at reversing the gains of French workers and giving corporations more leeway to manoeuvre against their employees.

The law will give companies greater freedom to reduce pay, make it easier for them to fire workers and create poorly paid positions instead of permanent contracts. It gives employers the space to negotiate the 35-hour work week, meaning staff may work up to 40 hours a week — or even 60 in exceptional circumstances.

Peter Jacquemain, a close adviser to the French labour minister, resigned over his disagreement with this bill. In an interview with L'Humanité newspaper he declared "This bill is a historic mistake. It is a regression in social rights, to the extent that many gains of the workers will be renegotiated at a business level, where the balance of power is systematically not

favourable for the employees."

A million people signed a petition against the proposed reform in February. In March a daily night-time sit-in and occupation of public spaces started in Paris and spread out around the country. It became known as the Nuit Debout ("Up All Night") movement. Following France's long history of youth protest movements — from May 1968 to various rallies and protests in the early 2000—the Nuit Debout movement is led by youth and students who are opposing the government's pro-corporate policies and standing up for their future. Asked in an interview with the Guardian newspaper on why he got involved in the protest movement, K Ivanovitch from the city of Lyon responded "because politicians do not represent in any way the aspirations of the people. We want a society built on something other than just profit and money-making."

Imperialist War at Home

Ivanovitch's feelings are shared among a lot of youth in France that find themselves increasingly in worst economical situation. The rate of unemployment, which stands at 10 percent overall, is at 24 percent for young people. The rate of youth unemployment in French suburbs and deprived areas largely populated with African and Muslim immigrant families arise over 40 percent. Now, 11 years after the 2005 protest movements against poverty, racism and dismay of the government towards the French suburbs, the situation have got worst!

A study released on January 2014 by the social policy consultants COMPAS shows that 8.7 million French people live below the poverty line, which represents around

Workers, Students, Youth and Farmers Demand Progressive Change



14 percent of the population, the highest rates of poverty since 1997. The number of people living below the poverty line in the French suburb is even three times higher than the national average.

Report published in June 2015 by UNICEF show that more than 3 million children living in France — or one in every five — live below the poverty line. The report revealed that around 30,000 children are homeless, while 9,000 live in slums and 140,000 drop out of school each year.

The overall situation of students, poor and working people in France is worsening as the income inequality gap between poor and rich keeps growing. The fight against this controversial labor reforms bill fits within the fight against Hollande's government austerity policies, from more privatizations to cuts on social services.

A Wall Street Journal headline from September 2015 reads "French Budget Focuses on Spending Cuts, Tax Breaks for Businesses". The article goes on to state that the French government presented a 2016 budget that centers on restraining public spending and a deepening of a three-year program to grant more than €40 billion in tax breaks to businesses.

The students and workers movement in France are fighting back! They are responding to this recent government attack, through the labor reform bill, by increasing strikes, rallies and protests throughout the country and disrupting the economical life.

On May 10, facing major public protests and opposition to the labor reform bill from a group of his own MPs, French Prime Minister Valls announced that



Truck drivers from the Force Ouvriere labour union block highway A26 in France.

the government planned to force the bill through parliament without a vote, using Article 49.3 of the French Constitution. This anti-democratic provision 49-3, allows the executive to force the National Assembly to either adopt the bill or bring down the government, meaning that in order to prevent the bill from passing the Socialist Party's MPs opposing the bill would have to vote in favour of unseating their own government.

This is not the first time that the Hollande government uses this undemocratic clause. On February 17, 2015, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls' government enacted this provision to pass the so-called "Macron Law," named after French economy minister, Emmanuel Macron, a former investment banker. This law constitutes an attack on the French working class with the privatizes of numerous public companies, facilitating the laying off of workers and increasing fees for a number of medical and legal services. Ironically, in 2006 French Prime Minister at that time Dominique de Villepin, used this same Article 49.3. François Hollande was then the First Secretary of the French Socialist Party and head of the opposition, he attacked Villepin's decision calling Article 49-3 "an act of brutality, a denial of democracy, a way of blocking or preventing parliamentary debate." Fast forward 2016, the Hollande's government is using the same dirty trick to force through parliament the unpopular "Loi Travail".

"This denial of democracy after a social movement that brought together hundreds of thousands of people in the streets, in businesses, universities, high schools and public squares of France is an insult to the people of this country." Commented Nuit Debout's organizers through a public

statement on their website.

Loi Travail : non, merci !

By forcing this labor law reforms through parliament without vote, the Hollande's government didn't succeed in silencing the opposition. Quite the contrary!

Students and workers from all parts of France continued mobilizing to demand the repeal of this law. Some 220,000 workers took over the streets on May 17, with thousands more on picket lines, blockading fuel depots and occupying refineries in the ongoing battle against the new anti-labor law. In Paris protesters waved banners reading: "What the government do, streets will undo." Two days later on May 19th over 400,000 people took part in protests nationwide.

French workers and militants with the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) continued to strike, blockade and disrupt oil refineries and nuclear power stations. According to figures from the Ministry of Transportation, as of May 26 oil workers strikes have forced the closure of 3,000 gas stations, which created a huge shortage causing a third of France's petrol stations to run dry. This forced the government to start using its strategic fuel reserves. The workers strike at nuclear plants across the country caused outages at, at least 11 power plants. Union activists also blocked roads, bridges and ports in northern France while some train drivers and air traffic controllers joined the strike.

One of the strategic locations affected by the strike was the oil terminals at the Port of Le Havre operated by CIM, a major crude oil and refined product storage operator in France. Workers there voted 95 percent in favor of an open-ended strike. Franck Barbay, CGT union secretary to CIM said

"We import 40% of national crude oil here. We supply refineries, the airports of Orly and Roissy. We are aware of our responsibilities, but we expect that Mr. Valls takes his by repealing the law."

Despite the gas shortages and disruptions an overwhelming majority of French people supports the protests. According to the Guardian newspapers, a recent Ifop poll suggests that six out of ten French think the protest movement and blockages are "justified" and another Opinionway survey found that 66 per cent think François Hollande, should scrap it

In Port-de-Bouc, southern France, three gas stations had shut because of the blockades. Journalists with AP witnessed the lines of people waiting to fill at the pump "I've been waiting for half an hour," said Sarah Lasbe, a 26-year-old restaurant employee. "I don't mind waiting because I think they are right," she said.

The French government is losing the public opinion battle. Hollande's approval ratings are record low. According to an Ifop poll published in April in the Journal du Dimanche, only 14 per cent of the people are satisfied with his performance.

William Martinet, president of the country's main student organization UNEF said "French President Francois Hollande is cut off from social reality. He was not elected for this labor law."

Hollande's government and the French ruling class government are desperately responding to the pressure by engaging in a negative media campaign against the protesters and unleashing their brutal police force on them. Pierre Gattaz, head of the MEDEF, France's largest employer federation joined the negative media campaign by calling the protesters "hooligans" and "terrorists" and called on the Hollande government to "to have the rule of law respected".

At least 1300 people were arrested during weeks of protest, videos of police brutality against protesters surface daily on social media. The videos showed the disproportionate use force by police on protesters and strikers, including a horrifying video of a police officer in Toulouse aggressively grabbing a woman by the neck, shoving her against railings and throwing her to the ground. The police are also attacking independent and freelance journalist who are covering the protests. In a statement released on May 30, 2016 Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said that they are "very concerned about a surge in unlawful police violence against journalists covering protests against the government's labour reform law and calls on France's highest authorities to put a stop

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2016 Che Guevara Brigade A Huge Success!

Participants Brought Back Great Experiences and Memories to Share!

By Azza Rojbi

The Ernesto Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade has been an amazing opportunity for people living in Canada to travel to Cuba, immerse themselves in the Cuban reality and learn about its gains and achievements. Hundreds of people of various ages, abilities, skills and backgrounds have participated since 1993. The brigade is organized by the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) and the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

26 participants from all across Canada joined this year 24th Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade for two full weeks of adventure, volunteering, learning & fun! The Che brigade combines volunteer work with a cultural, social and political program visiting different historical sites, schools, clinics and yes, even the beach!

The brigade visited the provinces of Artemisa, Cienfuegos and Villa Clara. The brigade arrived to Cuba on April 30th, and started its journey in the province of Artemisa. Brigadistas stayed at the Julio Antonio Mella International Camp in Caimito. This camp was also host to 200 international delegates to the May Day International Solidarity Brigade. This created a great opportunity for brigadistas to connect and exchange with social justice and Cuba solidarity activists from around the world.

May 1, May Day, Workers Day, A Big and Special Day in Cuba

In the darkness of the early morning of May 1, everyone at the camp awoke to the songs of Silvio Rodriguez and started to get ready for the exciting day ahead. We got in buses and drove to Havana for the International Worker's Day celebration, where every year more than a million people, gather for the May Day parade at the Plaza de la Revolucion at the foot of the giant statues of national heroes Che Guevara and Jose Marti.

As the sun started rising over beautiful

Havana, hundreds of thousands of people flood the streets carrying colorful signs and flags, dancing, singing and chanting to celebrate their Revolution. Marchers called for the end to the U.S. blockade on Cuba and the return of Guantanamo Bay to Cuba.

On May 2nd, international delegates to May Day and Cuba solidarity activist from around the world gathered in the Havana International Conference Center for the International Meeting in Solidarity with Cuba. Brigadistas heard speeches from representative of the Cuban government and delegates from the solidarity movement around the world. Organisers with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade -Vancouver participated at the conference. Brigadista Azza Rojbi, coordinator of Friends of Cuba

Cuban National Assembly are women, while in the case of the Provincial Assemblies, women delegates comprise 50.5%.

The brigade program was very rich and diverse. We visited schools, cultural centers, museums, historical sights, hospitals and community projects. We also had the opportunity to meet with Cuban artists, representatives from Cuban mass organizations and from all levels of the Cuban Government, such as elected representatives of the National Assembly of People's Power. Those meetings and visits brought us a greater understanding of how a small island which has been under constant attack by the most aggressive country in the world for over 50 years, can still be an example for building the better world.



Brigadistas visit the Latin American School of Medicine, Havana, Cuba.

Another highlight of the trip was the visit to the Ernesto Che Guevara memorial center and mausoleum in Santa Clara. The mausoleum houses the remains of Che Guevara and 29 of his fellow co-fighters killed in 1967 in Bolivia. The brigade honored his legacy by laying a wreath under the grand status of Che overseeing the memorial center. The visit was very powerful and emotional as brigadistas got to learn more about the life of Comandante Che Guevara and the ideals he stood and fought for.

Against the U.S. Blockade -Vancouver, spoke as representatives of the solidarity movement with Cuba in Canada. The event was important for further connecting with other solidarity groups around the world and sharing experiences.

In the spirit of Ernesto Che Guevara, the Brigade took part in volunteer work at organic farm cooperatives (organoponico). We had the honor to work alongside representative from the the Federation of Cuban Women (Federación de Mujeres Cubanas—FMC). We got to meet them, share anecdotes, ask questions and learn more about the gains and challenges of Cuban Women since the revolution. Brigadistas were astonished to hear about the high level of participation of Cuban women in the political and economic life of the country. 49% of deputies to the

The Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade is an incredible way to visit Cuba, to dig deeper into its fascinating culture, to learn about its social gains, to understand its challenges and to make an important contribution through your volunteer work.

Next year will be the 25th anniversary of the brigade. It will be a unique opportunity for you to travel to Cuba and experience the Brigade for yourself. For more information about the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade, you can visit the website at www.canadiannetworkoncuba.ca/brigade, e-mail chevolbrigade@gmail.com, or in British Columbia, you can also contact B.C. Coordinators Tamara Hansen and Thomas Davies at 778-882-5223 or vancubasolidarity@gmail.com

*Follow Azza Rojbi on Twitter:
@Azza_R14*



Che Guevara Brigade Continues ...

*“The Struggle has to continue. There is no other option.
Together in unity we can achieve victory.
We can build a new and better world.”*

Speech by Azza Rojbi, Coordinator of Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver and organiser with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, at the International meeting in solidarity with Cuba.

Havana International Convention Center

Havana, Cuba | May 2, 2016

Thank you, I will try to speak in Spanish. It is going to be a challenge for me and all of you but we are fighters so we love challenges!

Thanks to all our Cuban comrades for organising this event and really for this opportunity. It is very important for us fighters and workers in all part of the world to be together in a place like this to share our experiences in the struggle.

My name is Azza, I am from Vancouver [Canada], I work with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba and the new group Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade-Vancouver, previously known as the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver. It was for the freedom of the Cuban 5 and now that our 5 are here with us in this room, we have changed our name and mandate. We organise against the blockade and to demand the return of Guantanamo to Cuba.

A lot of people here have many years of experience in working for the freedom of the 5 Cuban heroes and it is crucial that now we use this experience to continue the struggle. This is what we are trying to do in Vancouver.

ver. We had 110 consecutive protests every month for the Cuban 5 in front of the U.S. consulate and now that the 5 are here with us today, we are still there in front of the U.S. consulate in Vancouver every month against the U.S. blockade. They don't like it, they don't want it, but we are still there because we have to fight for Cuba. We have to fight for Cuba's sovereignty because Cuba fights for all of us! We heard here from people from all part of the world saying thank you to Cuba for inspiring us, thank you to the Cuban doctors for their great contributions around the world. Cuba is a very important example for us in all parts of the world.

Now, as I previously mentioned, in Vancouver every month, every 17 of the month, as compañera Kenia said, we are in front of the U.S. consulate and we are very happy that our friends in Ottawa have joined us. Now in Ottawa also every month they are in front of the U.S. embassy in Canada. This is very significant.

As Cuba is an example, in Vancouver we also want to be an example for working together for Cuba. This is very important also because Vancouver is very close to the United States. The border crossing is only 40 minutes from Vancouver, we work together with our friends in Seattle in the state of Washington. They now come to our events in Vancouver and we go to theirs in Seattle in Washington. This cooperation is key because in our

experience is was what was vital for the victory of the freedom of the Cuban 5; unity, cooperation, consistency. This three are very essential to use today to continue the struggle. So I want to invite all the international

A Talk by Azza Rojbi



delegations to join us in action every 17th of the month, it doesn't have to be a protest, it can be writing letters, calling your local representative, calling the media, there are a lot of options that exist that I think we can use and we have the capacity to use in this fight against the blockade and to have another victory!

Thanks to all our friends from ICAP and the Communist Party of Cuba for showing all of us around the world the example of Cuba, the example that it will be possible if we work hard and work together to change things, to change the world and why not? We are here for this! So we start by fighting for the sovereignty of Cuba, fighting against the illegal occupation of Guantanamo, fighting against the U.S. blockade.

If any of you have ideas, suggestions, if you want to work closer with us in Vancouver, if you want to connect with other organisations around the world, this is the place to do so and I invite you to come and talk to me.

All of us here need to exchange ideas, exchange experiences because together we can win, together we can have more victories. I think that the proof of that is here with us, it is Gerardo, it is Fernando, it is our 5 heroes here with us in Cuba. Their presence is our continuity! It is very clear for me as a young leader that there are victories, that the struggle has to continue, that change is possible. ¡Venceremos! We will win!

Azza Rojbi speaking at the May 2nd International Meeting in Havana, Cuba



WE REVOLUTIONARIES OFTEN LACK THE KNOWLEDGE
& THE INTELLECTUAL AUDACITY TO FACE THE TASKS OF
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW HUMAN BEING BY
METHODS DIFFERENT FROM THE CONVENTIONAL ONES,
& THE CONVENTIONAL METHODS SUFFER FROM THE
INFLUENCE OF THE SOCIETY THAT CREATED THEM (ONCE
AGAIN THE TOPIC OF THE RELATION BETWEEN FORM &
CONTENT APPEARS.) DISORIENTATION IS
GREAT & THE PROBLEMS OF MATERIAL
CONSTRUCTION ABSORB US.

Che

CELEBRATING THE 88TH BIRTHDAY OF
REVOLUTIONARY HERO
ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA
WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET

Cuba and U.S. Set Ambitious Agenda for Coming Months

By Sergio Alejandro Gomez*

The third meeting of the Bilateral Commission established by Cuba and the United States was held in Havana, May 16, and an ambitious work agenda for the coming months was set, as part of the process of moving toward normalization of relations, according to Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Relations.

Josefina Vidal, the ministry's director general for the United States and Cuba's leading representative to the Commission, stated during a press conference that the two sides made plans for the signing of new cooperation agreements.



Vancouverites protest outside the U.S. Consulate to demand an end to the U.S. blockade of Cuba!

Since December 17, 2014, Havana and Washington have agreed to a total of nine accords on a variety of issues such as direct flights, postal service, protection of marine areas, and the reestablishment of diplomatic relations.

Vidal said that, among the topics on which cooperation agreements may be reached soon, are health, agriculture, meteorology, seismology, and protected terrestrial areas – within the context of extending the accord previously signed on marine environments.

She explained that prospects exist for the adoption of agreements on a joint response to oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida, as well as on combating drug trafficking, saying, "There is a broad range of issues which are being discussed



Josefina Vidal speaks to media during a press conference on U.S. - Cuba negotiations

and should lead to new accords."

The Commission additionally discussed upcoming high-level visits related to areas of mutual interest on which the decision has been made to cooperate, as is the case with health and agriculture.

Likewise under consideration are more technical exchanges on issues like the environment, nautical mapping, and other important questions for the two countries, such as drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, and migration fraud.

Vidal reported that the initiation of talks on intellectual and industrial property was established as a goal, "This regards an area of great interest, such as the protection of brand names and patents."

"I should say that the objectives we have set for the next three months, and the agenda, are fairly ambitious, in terms of new actions, accords, visits, and new talks," she noted, adding, "This will take time, but what's important is that it has begun."

The Bilateral Commission was established in August last year, to provide follow up on issues related to the normalization of relations between the countries, and address short and medium term plans.

"We believe that it is a useful mechanism which was created by the joint decision of the two parties," Vidal explained, "This is the first time Cuba and the United States have decided to provide ourselves with such a mechanism."

The U.S. delegation was led by Ambassador Kristie Kenney, State Department Counselor, with John S. Creamer, deputy assistant secretary for the Western Hemisphere attending, as well.

According to a communiqué from the U.S. Embassy in Havana, the two governments recognized that significant steps have

been taken toward greater cooperation in environmental protection, air travel, direct mail, maritime and port security, health, agriculture, educational and cultural exchanges, and regulatory issues, adding that the delegations also discussed talks on human rights and economic claims. The text stated that the United States expects to hold meetings on these issues "in the near future."

CUBA STILL CANNOT USE THE DOLLAR

Despite the most recent measures adopted by President Obama to modify some aspects of the blockade, among them authorization for Cuba to use the U.S. dollar – announced in March – international transactions in this currency have not yet been possible.

Josefina Vidal reported that, as of Monday, May 16, no such operations have taken place in banks in third countries, which remain "fearful and concerned" about the possibility of facing multimillion dollar fines for processing Cuban transactions.

She explained that the use of the dollar has been authorized "on the books," but that this is not enough, adding that it is imperative that the U.S. clarify the situation with international banks.

She cited as an example the recent meeting between Secretary of State John Kerry and representatives from European financial institutions to address the situation with Iranian transactions.

Even when these operations become possible, Cuba remains subject to other limitations, Vidal noted.

This modification refers only to international financial transactions, not those between Cuba and the United States.

She explained that in order to normalize relations between the two countries, Cuba must be permitted to open correspondence accounts in U.S. financial institutions. If this is not allowed, Cuba will continue to be obliged to "triangulate" payments to U.S. companies through banks in third countries, which raises costs for all involved.

THE BLOCKADE

The Bilateral Commission, Vidal said, reviewed progress being made on agreements reached since its second meeting in

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Por Sergio Alejandro Gomez*

Cuba y Estados Unidos definen ambiciosa agenda para los próximos meses

Por Sergio Alejandro Gómez*

Josefina Vidal, directora General de Estados Unidos de la cancillería cubana y máxima representante de la Isla en la Comisión, dijo en conferencia de prensa que ambas partes se han trazado el propósito de suscribir nuevos acuerdos de cooperación

El tercer encuentro de la Comisión Bilateral entre Cuba y Estados Unidos, celebrado este lunes en La Habana, trazó una ambiciosa agenda de trabajo para los próximos meses como parte del proceso hacia la normalización de las relaciones, según fuentes del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores.

Josefina Vidal, directora General de Estados Unidos de la cancillería cubana y máxima representante de la Isla en la Comisión, dijo en conferencia de prensa que ambas partes se han trazado el propósito de suscribir nuevos acuerdos de cooperación.

Desde el 17 de diciembre de 2014, La Habana y Washington han firmado un total de nueve entendimientos sobre diversos temas como vuelos directos, correo postal, protección de áreas marinas y el propio restablecimiento de relaciones diplomáticas.

Vidal dijo que entre los temas en los que próximamente se podría llegar a entendimientos están la cooperación en salud, agricultura, meteorología, sismología y áreas terrestres protegidas, haciendo extensivo el acuerdo sobre protección de áreas marinas anteriormente firmado.

Precisó que existen perspectivas de acuerdos sobre la respuesta conjunta en casos de contaminación por petróleo en el Golfo de México y el Estrecho de la Florida, así como en el enfrentamiento al narcotráfico. "Hay una gran gama de temas que se están discutiendo y que deben finalizar con nuevos acuerdos".

La Comisión discutió también sobre próximas visitas de alto nivel en áreas de interés común en las que se ha decidido cooperar, como son los casos de la agricultura y la salud.

Asimismo, se abrió la posibilidad de celebrar nuevos intercambios técnicos en temas como el medio ambiente,

hidrografía, y otras cuestiones importantes entre ambos países como tráfico de drogas, tráfico de personas y fraude migratorio.

Se trazó como meta, añadió, empezar a dialogar sobre propiedad intelectual, incluyendo la propiedad industrial. "Esto se refiere a un área de mucho interés como es el de la protección de marcas y de patentes".

"Debo decirle que las metas que nos hemos trazado los próximos tres meses y la agenda es bastante ambiciosa en cuanto a nuevas acciones, acuerdos visitas y nuevos diálogos" precisó Vidal. "Tomará tiempo, pero lo importante es que ha comenzado".

La Comisión Bilateral fue lanzada en agosto del año pasado para dar seguimiento a los

temas de la normalización de relaciones entre ambos países, y abordar los planes a corto y mediano plazos.

"Creemos que es un mecanismo útil que se ha creado por decisión mutua de las dos partes", precisó Vidal. "Es la primera vez que Cuba y Estados Unidos deciden dotarse de un mecanismo como este".

La delegación estadounidense estuvo presidida por la Embajadora Kristie Kenney, Consejera del Departamento de Estado norteamericano, y asistió también el subsecretario Adjunto, John S. Creamer.

Según un comunicado de la Embajada de Estados Unidos en La Habana, "ambos gobiernos reconocieron que se han dado pasos significativos hacia una mayor cooperación en la protección ambiental, la aviación civil, el correo postal directo, la seguridad portuaria y marítima, la salud, la agricultura, los intercambios educacionales y culturales, y temas regulatorios".

El texto añade que "las delegaciones también conversaron sobre los diálogos de derechos humanos y reclamaciones (económicas), y los Estados Unidos esperan sostener encuentros sobre estos temas en el futuro cercano".

CUBA AÚN NO PUEDE UTILIZAR EL DÓLAR

A pesar de las últimas medidas del presidente Barack Obama que modifican algunos elementos de la aplicación del bloqueo, entre ellos el uso del dólar, aún no se han podido concretar transacciones internacionales en esa

moneda.

Josefina Vidal aseguró que hasta este lunes no se ha logrado efectuar las operaciones a través de bancos en terceros países, que continúan "temerosos y preocupados" ante la posibilidad de recibir multimillonarias multas por procesar las transacciones cubanas.

Explicó que el asunto ya está "autorizado en los libros", pero no es suficiente. Resulta necesario, añadió, que Estados Unidos esclarezca la situación a la banca internacional.

Citó como ejemplo una reciente reunión entre el secretario de Estado John Kerry y representantes de instituciones financieras europeas para abordar la situación de las transacciones con Irán.

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Josefina Vidal habla a los medios de comunicación durante una rueda de prensa en la negociaciones entre Cuba y los EE.UU.



Cuba y Estados Unidos Definen Ambiciosa Agenda Para los Próximos Meses



The New Era of War and Occupation and the Necessity of Building an Antiwar Movement

Since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, our world has been defined by a new era of war and occupation. Year after year we have seen yet another country invaded and occupied as we have seen in Iraq, or subjected to military intervention such as in Libya. We have seen sanctions imposed on countries resistant to foreign domination such as Iran, and imperialist backed mercenaries wreak havoc in Syria and tear the country apart. We have seen drone wars silently terrorize innocent people in Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan and Somalia. Today we see that the result of constant war, occupation and imperialist arming of so-called "moderate rebels" and mercenaries has created the rise of the terrorist organization Daesh. Now the US and their allies have a new justification to wage war on Iraq, Syria and Libya, with the tired claim of fighting terror once again. All of this death, destruction and devastation has been part of the new era of war and occupation conducted by the US government and their allies such as Canada, the UK and France. While imperialist governments—such as Canada—and mainstream media outlets would like you to believe that this is part of a "war on terror", the truth is that it is a war OF terror, in order to save a failing capitalist economic system with a band-aid fix of plundered resources and new markets.

It isn't difficult to see the brutality of these wars and occupations. So then how does the US and their allies—like Canada—get away with carrying out these bloody crimes? The answer is with the age-old tactic of fear and division, today seen in the form of Islamophobia. Mainstream media and rhetoric from imperialist politicians skillfully deceive the general public into believing that they are in imminent danger of Islamic terror and that Muslims are to be feared. Once that fear is gripping someone's sense of reality, it is a lot easier to carry out their wars and occupations. This is a tool in the war abroad,

MAWO discusses and protests Islamophobia and imperialist aggression at home and abroad

By Janine Solanki

but also carried out in the war at home. If people in the US, Canada and other Western countries were united and not taken over by racism and fear, then maybe we would focus on more important things. Like why is the government of Canada or the US not

which rely on the complacency of their populations.

As the only truly active antiwar coalition in Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) has the responsibility of countering the Islamophobic lies and media manipulation. We may not have mainstream media on our side, but what we do have is the truth, and from discussion to protest we are speaking truth to power. On Wednesday May 18th, MAWO organized a community forum titled, "Islamophobia: the War at Home, Why Imperialist Governments Use Racism and Fear." The forum speakers included Mamdoh Ashir, Iraqi-Canadian and Muslim community social justice organizer; Wala Zaidan, an Iraqi high school student and poet; Azza Rojbi, a North African social justice organizer from Tunisia and executive member of MAWO, as well as Thomas Davies, an organizer with the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 which is demanding a full repeal of Canada's so-called "anti-terrorism" law. Following the insightful presentations from the panel, there was a lively discussion between participants on how to work together to defeat Islamophobia.

On Saturday May 28th MAWO took to the streets with slogans against war and Islamophobia, with an antiwar rally and petition campaign in Downtown Vancouver. Protesters talked to many people who stopped

to sign petitions against Canada's participation in the war on Syria and Iraq, as well as to demand that Canada end its arms deal with Saudi Arabia. These actions, which combine public outreach and protest, have been organized monthly by MAWO over the last 13 years.

MAWO will continue bringing antiwar demands to the streets of Vancouver until this new era of war and occupation is stopped.

MAWO encourages all peace-loving people to join in standing up against war, occupation and Islamophobia. Check out www.mawovancouver.org and @mawovan for upcoming events and actions, and get involved!

No to war and occupation, yes to self-determination!

No to Islamophobia!



MAWO public forum "Islamophobia: the War at Home, Why Imperialist Governments Use Racism and Fear."

Above photo: MAWO monthly antiwar rally & petition drive



investing in education, healthcare, housing and employment, instead of spending billions or even trillions of dollars on war, occupation and destruction of other nations? How is it that these governments can introduce laws which cut back on our human and democratic rights and get away with it? If racism and fear, and especially now Islamophobia, were not used to divide people here at home, I think we would see more people of all faiths and backgrounds, ages and ethnicities organizing together for our rights and against war. And that is a very scary thing for imperialist governments



Another Great Depression

A Poem By Wala Zaidan

We are still living in another great depression
but so silent and innocent
dominating every vein in our body,
enslaving our minds
Truth has become an illness.

We are trapped into these four walls
built by false promotions
filled with greed, wanting and
absorbing everything
just so your soul screams enough!

We are no longer feeding our minds
with knowledge
rather than money and power
to fulfill our hungry desires

our minds has become anorexic
forcibly feeding it shame

we are living in another great depression
enslaved by TV screens,
believing it without any question
green papers has become another obsession

we are secretly prisoners carrying
our royal kings to heaven

war has become another sort of art
just sit back and enjoy the
depression
depression crawling back to our
minds, consuming every affection

I don't blame you when you hate
It's all about wisdom v.s power
that's why the truth buries his nose
under his book
that's why the society calls him
crazy and liar

that's why the needy is forgotten,
to the point he buried his hopes in
fire
that's why the liar adores the mic,
with his loud and ignorant logic,
it killed the truth by making it
choke itself with the wire
in hopes to light up the candle
brighter

I am not asking you to feel but to
wake up.

We are still living in another great
depression
but so silent and innocent
when will we ever learn from our
lessons?



Supporting the 20th
Anniversary Celebration of
OBSESSION
Pioneers of Cuban Hip Hop!

By Janine Solanki

Throughout history, art has been a powerful weapon in the fight for a better world. Mobilization Against War & Occupation - MAWO's Hip Hop 4 Peace festivals have brought together a wide range of Hip Hop artists using rhythms and rhymes to

speak out against war and for peace. Obsession, the pioneers of Cuban Hip Hop, have graced the Hip Hop 4 Peace stage many times to amaze audiences with their talent and social justice messages. As Obsession nears their 20th anniversary, MAWO came together with local Hip Hop artists for a special evening of music and fundraising to support Obsession's 20th anniversary celebration! Obsession is

organizing three days of workshops, seminars and hip hop events in Havana, Cuba, with the support of Vancouver's fundraising efforts. On May 24th, the



OBSESSION

Hip Hop 4 Peace Obsession fundraiser showcased the work of Obsession via a documentary film and photo exhibit and local Hip Hop artists took to the stage to perform to a packed room of supporters. A big shout out to all artists who participated in the event and who carry the message of HIP HOP 4 PEACE!



* EN ESPAÑOL *

Por Macarena Cataldo

En los últimos meses, el caso del agua tóxica de Flint (Michigan) ha sido cubierto por distintos medios de comunicación y ha captado la atención de todo el mundo.

El tema del agua tóxica está ahora en el centro de atención, y se ha transformado en un tema recurrente, el cual aparece en la televisión, en la radio, en los periódicos y en nuestras conversaciones diarias.

Sin embargo, la tragedia del agua potable en Flint, no representa un incidente aislado. Se han registrado un sinnúmero de desastres a causa del agua potable tóxica alrededor de todo el mundo. La mayoría de ellos no son reportados al público por los medios de comunicación.

A grandes rasgos el problema del agua de grifo toxica puede deberse a diferentes causas: (i) administraciones gubernamentales negligentes, (ii) contaminación de los recursos hídricos, y (iii) sanciones en contra de determinados países con el fin de sabotear sus sistemas de agua.

En este artículo se expondrán algunos de los casos más emblemáticos de agua potable tóxica en el mundo. Los antecedentes que se presentarán a continuación no son historias de ficción con el fin de sostener una posición, son hechos concretos que nos muestran la inmoralidad de este toxico sistema.

1. San José, Louisiana, Estados Unidos (2016)

En esta ciudad como en Flint, la mayoría de la población es afroamericana

(alrededor de un 60%), y al menos un 40% de la ciudad vive bajo el umbral de la pobreza. El agua potable en esta ciudad ha mantenido altos niveles de hierro por más de 10 años. La calidad del agua no es óptima y su color marrón hace que sea desagradable y poco atractiva para su consumo. De acuerdo con las autoridades beber esta agua no representa ningún riesgo para la salud, sin embargo las autoridades declararon no estar dispuestas a beberla.

Los habitantes de San José se sienten muy frustrados por la negligencia de su gobierno respecto a esta situación y creen que los funcionarios habrían actuado

atrás en el corazón rural del condado de Bruce, Ontario. La comunidad de Walkerton, con una población de menos de 5.000 habitantes a la fecha, vio enfermar a más de 2.300 personas y morir a siete.

La tragedia se inició en Mayo del 2000, cuando una cepa peligrosa de E. coli contaminó las fuentes de agua de Walkerton debido a la escorrentía agrícola. Un gran número de ciudadanos de Walkerton comenzó a experimentar diarrea con sangre, infecciones gastrointestinales y otros síntomas asociados a la infección por E. coli.

Con el fin de comprobar la presencia de alguna cepa peligrosa de E. Coli se realizaron análisis de agua en laboratorio, los cuales evidenciaron la contaminación por una extraña cepa. Sin embargo, las autoridades negaron el resultado de los análisis e insistieron en la buena calidad del agua.

La investigación pública realizada en el 2002, comprobó el desarrollo de prácticas inadecuadas y fraude sistemático por parte de los operadores de servicios públicos. La privatización de los análisis de agua municipal, la ausencia de criterios de calidad en los análisis y la falta de herramientas para la notificación de los resultados contribuyeron a la crisis. Además, el informe de investigación reveló que, si la Comisión de Servicios Públicos de Walkerton hubiese admitido antes que el agua estaba contaminada, posiblemente se habría podido salvar la vida de las personas que murieron por beber el agua contaminada con E. Coli.

El caso de agua tóxica en Walkerton no es una tragedia aislada. Es resultado de la falta de regulación y del desmantelamiento de los servicios públicos, debido a la privatización incentivada por las políticas neoliberales.

3. Estados Unidos intencionalmente destruye el suministro de agua de Irak (1996)

Este despiadado ataque comenzó cuando Estados Unidos bombardeó deliberadamente el sistema de agua potable de Irak durante la Guerra del



más rápido si los residentes de la ciudad fuesen blancos o ricos. Flint, San José y las comunidades afroamericanas a lo largo de Estados Unidos acusan estar sufriendo de un "racismo medio ambiental", en cuál el derecho a agua potable limpia, segura y no toxica se le niega a los pobres y a los afroamericanos.

2. Walkerton, Ontario, Canadá (2000)

El caso del agua tóxica de Walkerton representa una de las más graves intoxicaciones por agua potable en la historia de Canadá. Esto sucedió 16 años



Golfo. Sin embargo, después de la guerra, sucesivos ataques se llevaron a cabo en contra de los iraquíes. Estados Unidos promovió sanciones en contra Irak, las cuales fueron adoptadas por las Naciones Unidas, producto de esas sanciones económicas, Irak sufrió la falta de productos químicos de purificación, cloradores, bombas de dosificación química, tanques de agua y otros materiales necesarios para la purificación del agua. Esto incapacitó al gobierno iraquí de garantizar agua potable, y sigue afectando al sistema de agua potable incluso hoy.

Estados Unidos sabía el costo que pagarían los civiles iraquíes, en su mayoría niños, y siguió adelante. Diferentes documentos han sido desclasificados y los que incluyen información que confirma que Estados Unidos de manera deliberada destruyó el sistema de agua iraquí en pleno conocimiento de los costos para la población civil. Uno de los documentos, el del 22 de Enero, 1991 llamado "Irak, vulnerabilidades en el tratamiento de Agua" predice lo que pasaría cuando el gobierno iraquí no pudiese tener todo lo necesario para purificar el agua. El documento también sugiere la aparición de epidemias y brotes de enfermedades debido a los contaminantes y las bacterias que existen en el agua no purificada, y reconoce que la falta de agua potable afectara la producción de alimentos y medicinas.

Otros documentos discuten acerca de cómo los brotes de enfermedades afectarán la vida de los niños en Irak, así como el desarrollo de una lucha estratégica propagandística en la cual se culpa a Saddam Hussein por la falta de agua potable en Irak.

Todo esto constituye una violación

directa de la Convención de Ginebra, que establece que "Se prohíbe atacar, destruir, sustraer o inutilizar los bienes indispensables para la supervivencia de la población civil"

La sanción genocida mató a alrededor de dos millones de iraquíes, un tercio de ellos lactantes menores de cinco años. Nunca sabremos las muertes totales. Sin embargo, debemos entender que la máquina de guerra imperialista de los Estados Unidos es capaz de destruir y acabar con la vida de miles de civiles inocentes, con el fin de mantener su poder hegemónico.

4. Arica, Chile

En la ciudad de Arica, en el norte de Chile, se ha encontrado altos niveles de mercurio, plomo y arsénico en ríos, lagos y aguas subterráneas que se utilizan como fuentes de agua potable.

El problema comenzó hace 30 años, bajo la dictadura de Pinochet, cuando 20.000 toneladas de desechos tóxicos de fundición fueron importados desde Suecia a Arica. La minera sueca Boliden acordó con la empresa chilena Promel reciclar estos residuos, sin embargo, el proyecto nunca se llevó a cabo y los desechos quedaron abandonados sin protección en terrenos aledaños hasta el año 1998.

Desde 1990, la comunidad de Arica ha reportado altos índices de enfermedades graves como; cáncer, abortos involuntarios, enfermedades a la piel y problemas respiratorios. Los exámenes médicos mostraron niveles excesivos de arsénico en la sangre de los residentes.

En septiembre de 2013, las víctimas Arica presentaron una demanda contra Boliden Mineral, la minera sueca. Los demandantes alegaron que Boliden actuó con negligencia. Boliden negó la demanda en su totalidad y argumentó que la autoridad sanitaria chilena y Promel eran los responsables de los problemas de salud de los ciudadanos Arica. La Corte Suprema de Chile sostuvo que el Estado tenía que compensar a 365 residentes de Arica.

Entonces, el gobierno chileno contrató una empresa privada de tratamiento de residuos

para limpiar el área y purificar el agua potable, pero diferentes informes indican que la compañía tomó el dinero y no hizo nada para mejorar la calidad del agua. La empresa privada ni siquiera esta proporcionando las normas sanitarias mínimas en cuanto a los niveles de arsénico en el agua potable, poniendo en riesgo la salud de miles de ciudadanos.

Movilízate

Estas historias acerca de la toxicidad en el agua potable son una clara muestra de cómo el sistema capitalista no se preocupa por el bienestar y la salud de la población, es más no le interesa destruir la vida de millones de personas pobres y trabajadores con tal de maximizar su beneficio económico.

Para la clase dominante capitalista, el objetivo principal es generar ganancias. Para ellos el beneficio viene antes que el ser humano. Su negligencia criminal genera la miseria de la población del mundo y esta causado la destrucción de nuestro planeta.

El problema del agua potable tóxica está ocurriendo en diferentes lugares del mundo, mañana puede ser que suceda en tu ciudad también. Por esta razón, nosotros, la clase trabajadora, los pobres y los oprimidos debemos construir un movimiento revolucionario capaz de luchar por nuestros intereses y nuestros derechos fundamentales. Necesitamos un movimiento de masas para acabar con el tóxico sistema de producción capitalista. Podemos ganar. Debemos seguir la lucha y trabajar en unidad para la construcción de un mundo mejor.



Por Alison Bodine

Traducido por
Macarena Cataldo

“Venezuela necesita desesperadamente de la intervención política de sus vecinos”, así comienza el párrafo final de la edición de abril 12, del 2016 del Washington Post. Las últimas palabras de la editorial señalan: “La explosión probablemente no está muy lejos.”

Desde que el presidente Hugo Chávez llegó al poder en Venezuela en 1999, los medios de comunicación masivos han estado desarrollado una feroz campaña para demonizar al gobierno de la Revolución Bolivariana y sus líderes. Con cada nueva ola de intromisión extranjera, los gobiernos imperialistas como Estados Unidos junto con la violenta oposición contra-revolucionaria en Venezuela, trabajan mano a mano con los principales medios de comunicación para crear un clima de confusión y miedo, y así generar un ambiente propicio para llevar a cabo la intervención.

¿Qué es la OEA?

El editorial del Washington Post expone sus verdaderas intenciones al explicar que los “vecinos” de Venezuela “tienen ya un mecanismo en la Carta Democrática Interamericana, de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA), la cual prevé una acción colectiva cuando un régimen viola las normas constitucionales”.

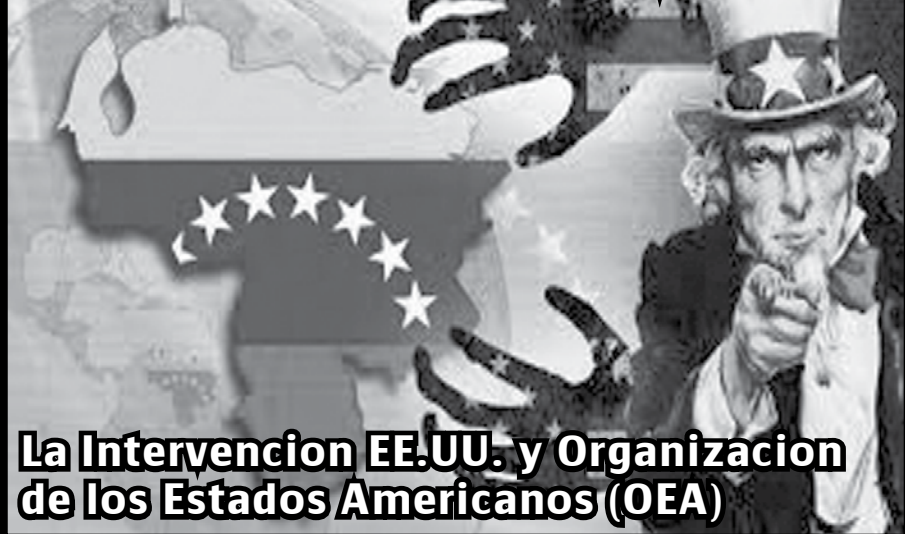
Pero antes discutir por qué la OEA ha sido llamada a actuar, debemos responder dos importantes preguntas.: Primero, ¿qué es la OEA? y segundo ¿Qué es la Carta Democrática Interamericana?

La Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) es una organización conformada por 35 Estados occidentales, entre ellos Venezuela, Estados Unidos y Canadá. Desde su formación en 1948, se ha hecho conocido en toda América Latina por su constante apoyo a políticas que favorecen los intereses del gobierno de EE.UU. y atentan contra los intereses de la gran masa de gente pobre y trabajadora en América Latina. Esta conclusión no es de extrañar, considerando que, en 2014, la OEA recibió más del 59% de sus fondos de los Estados Unidos (y un 10% de Canadá).

La oposición contrarrevolucionaria Venezolana recibe la aprobación del Gobierno de EE.UU.

La discusión acerca de la intervención de la OEA en Venezuela no es nueva; de hecho, el actual presidente de la OEA, Luis Almagro ya ha amenazado con recurrir a la Carta Democrática Interamericana, publicando un comunicado de prensa en la página web

¡EE.UU. saca tus manos de Venezuela!



de la OEA en Enero del 2016 en contra de Maduro. Mientras tanto, la violenta oposición contra-revolucionaria Venezolana ha ya comenzado a realizar más acciones en favor de sus demandas.

En la última semana de abril de 2016 una delegación conformada por miembros del la Asamblea Nacional de la derecha Venezolana, visitó Washington, DC para hacer precisamente lo que el Washington Post había sugerido, para pedir ayuda y la intervención extranjera de la OEA. La delegación que viajó a los EE.UU. incluyó a Luis Florido, el jefe de la delegación y diputado de la Asamblea Nacional de Venezuela, quien declaró ante la agencia de noticias EFE, “Exigimos que la OEA que discuta con urgencia la situación en Venezuela y llegue a una resolución donde se reconozca la crisis política, los presos políticos, y que le permita al pueblo de Venezuela realizar una elección para revocar al Presidente Nicolás Maduro”.

La lucha de la oposición Venezolana para derrocar al presidente Maduro

En diciembre de 2015, por primera vez en los casi 16 años de la Revolución Bolivariana, los representantes de la derecha Venezolana obtuvieron la mayoría en la Asamblea Nacional. Desde los primeros días del ejercicio de su cargo, esta mayoría contra-revolucionaria ha presentado un claro objetivo, frenar los logros alcanzados durante la revolución Bolivariana por los pobres y los trabajadores, además de manifestar desde el comienzo su intención de revocar al presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro.

Hasta ahora, su estrategia para forzar la salida del Presidente Maduro se ha centrado en aprobar leyes en la Asamblea Nacional, una de estas leyes aprobadas tenía como fin reducir el mandato presidencial de 6 a 4 años, así como cambiar algunos de los procedimientos del referendo revocatorio. Sin

embargo la revisión del Tribunal Supremo de Venezuela (TSJ) determinó que esta ley era anticonstitucional (que atenta contra el espíritu de la Constitución y por lo tanto requiere el voto del pueblo Venezolano para convertirse en ley).

Ahora, además de las llamadas a la intervención extranjera, la oposición contra-revolucionaria ha comenzado el procedimientos para realizar un referéndum revocatorio contra el presidente Maduro. Este proceso se basa en la Constitución de Venezuela de 1999, y aplicable a cualquier funcionario electo que ha servido al menos la mitad de su mandato. De acuerdo con la Constitución, el primer paso para comenzar la consulta es que el 20% de los electores deben firmar una petición declarando que quieren un referéndum, en Venezuela, esto significa que la oposición debe reunir alrededor de 4 millones de firmas.

Tras la finalización de este paso, la oposición debe recoger más votos para la revocación del presidente que el número de votos con que el Presidente Maduro fue elegido en las elecciones de 2013 para obtener su cargo, o más de 7,6 millones de voto. Esto debe ser realizado antes de Enero si quieren desencadenar una nueva elección presidencial. Si las firmas no son recogidos para el próximo año, el vicepresidente de Venezuela asumirá el cargo por el resto del término.

Otras tácticas de la oposición contra-revolucionaria Venezolana

Además de las leyes que la oposición de derecha ha propuesto en el Parlamento con la intención de remover al gobierno actual, ha introducido otras leyes como la de privatización de la vivienda pública y revertir algunos de los cambios progresistas realizados en la legislación laboral. La asamblea Nacional también aprobó la llamada “Ley de Amnistía.” Esta ley contempla la liberación de más de 115 presos en Venezuela por delitos

como; terrorismo, crimen organizado, tráfico de drogas y fraude, incluye también a los criminales que participaron en el intento de golpe contra el presidente Chávez en el 2002 y los miembros violentos de la oposición quienes en el 2014 mataron a 43 personas con las conocidas “guarimbas”. Sin embargo a pesar de su aprobación en la asamblea nacional, estas leyes no están vigentes en Venezuela por ser declaradas anticonstitucionales por el Tribunal Supremo de Justicia.

Continúa la intervención de EE.UU. en Venezuela

El apoyo político a la oposición contra-revolucionaria Venezolana es sólo un tentáculo de la estrategia de EE.UU. para la intervención en Venezuela. El panorama general de cómo el gobierno de EE.UU. está trabajando para defender sus intereses en contra de la Revolución Bolivariana y la gran mayoría de los Venezolanos está claramente establecido en un artículo del 2004 lanzado a través de Wikileaks. En este cable, el embajador de EE.UU. en Venezuela esbozó una estrategia de cinco puntos: “(1) Fortalecer las instituciones democráticas, (2) Penetrar la base política de Chávez, (3) Dividir el chavismo, (4) Proteger los negocios vitales para Estados Unidos, y (5) el aislamiento de Chávez a nivel internacional.”

En marzo de 2016, el presidente de EE.UU. Obama, renovó la orden ejecutiva innecesaria e infamatoria que declara a Venezuela una “amenaza inusual y extraordinaria a la seguridad nacional de los Estados Unidos”, y con ello renueva las sanciones económicas de Estados Unidos en contra de Venezuela. Estas sanciones, llamadas la “Ley de Defensa de la Sociedad Civil y Derechos Humanos en Venezuela 2014” se ha extendido hasta el 2019 por el Senado de EE.UU., y ahora está a la espera de su votación en la Cámara de Representantes.

Más allá de la manipulación y de la mentira de los medios de comunicación procedentes de EE.UU. y principales medios occidentales de comunicación masiva, existe también una gran cantidad de medios de comunicación de la oposición de derecha. Estrechos vínculos entre el gobierno estadounidense y los medios de comunicación de la oposición Venezolana han sido expuestos en los últimos años, incluyendo una petición “Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)” en 2010, que reveló que el gobierno de Estados Unidos había estado financiando a periodistas en Venezuela y otros países de América Latina a través de

la fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo.

Presidente Maduro, la Revolución Bolivariana y Venezuela no está solo!

Por más de 16 años de constante intervención de EE.UU., la Revolución Bolivariana, ha continuado luchando contra una violenta oposición contra-revolucionaria y la clase capitalista que todavía controla grandes sectores de la economía venezolana, incluyendo la producción y distribución de alimentos.

Hasta ahora el presidente Nicolas Maduro, el Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV) y la Revolución Bolivariana se han mantenido fuerte en contra de la intervención imperialista EE.UU. y los ataques de la oposición contra-revolucionaria. De hecho, las tres estrategias principales en el “plan de acción” de la coalición de derecha en la Asamblea Nacional, MUD (Movimiento

por el Consejo de Asuntos Hemisféricos (COHA), “A pesar de que Estados Unidos, respaldo por Canadá y el gobierno de Panamá durante la crisis en Venezuela en 2014, querían hacer más para intervenir en la situación local de Venezuela haciendo uso de la Carta Democrática para promover una política activa más energética e intervencionista, 29 estados miembros de la OEA optaron por votar a favor de una resolución en apoyo al gobierno electo del Presidente Nicolás Maduro “.

Se habían olvidado de las instituciones que la Revolución Bolivariana de Venezuela ha luchado tan duro por construir y fortalecer, como la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR), La Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC) y la Alternativa Bolivariana para las Américas (ALBA).

Viva Venezuela!

Hay otro editorial infame en la historia reciente de las relaciones EE.UU.-Venezuela. El 13 de abril de 2002, The New York Times publicó un artículo titulado “Hugo Chávez Salidas.” El editorial continúa: “Con la renuncia de ayer del presidente Hugo Chávez, la democracia venezolana ya no está amenazada por un aspirante a dictador. Chávez, un ruin demagogo renunció después de que el ejército intervino y entregó el poder a un respetado líder de negocios, Pedro Carmona. “Poco sabía el New York Times que a pesar de los fondos estadounidenses y el apoyo político, el pueblo de Venezuela triunfaría más tarde ese día y el presidente Hugo Chávez se volvería al poder en menos de 48 horas después de su forzada renuncia.

El 1 de mayo, el año 2016 el pueblo de Venezuela se movilizó junto a los trabajadores de todo el mundo para celebrar el Día Internacional de los Trabajadores y demostrar su apoyo al Presidente de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, y la Revolución Bolivariana. Estas movilizaciones tuvieron lugar en una situación política diferente, que el día que el presidente Chávez se volvió triunfante al poder en 2002, pero tiene lugar en la misma corriente.

El presidente Nicolás Maduro y el pueblo de Venezuela dirigido por el Partido Socialista Unido (PSUV) están luchando por mantener y avanzar en los logros obtenidos para las personas pobres y los trabajadores en Venezuela. Desde los países imperialistas como Estados Unidos y Canadá, es nuestra defender la soberanía y la autodeterminación de Venezuela contra la intervención imperialista.



Los venezolanos salieron a las calles para defender la Gran Misión Vivienda Venezuela y rechazar la Ley de Otorgamiento de Títulos de Propiedad a Beneficiarios de la GMVV, creada por la oposición, 11 de Mayo, 2016.

democrático Unido) han fracasado. Ellos han tratado de “realizar movilizaciones callejeras para presionar por la renuncia de Maduro,” sin embargo estas movilizaciones han sido contrarrestadas con las masivas contra-protestas organizado en apoyo de la Revolución Bolivariana y en apoyo a Nicolás Maduro. El MUD, además ha utilizado su mayoría en la Asamblea Nacional para “aprobar una enmienda constitucional que reduzca el período presidencial a cuatro años, lo que llevaría a elecciones este año” y para “empezar a movilizarse por un referendo revocatorio, a partir de una nueva ley de referendos, para impedir que se bloqueen o dificulten “, no obstante ambas leyes se han determinado inconstitucionales por el Tribunal Supremo de Venezuela.

Ahora que la oposición de derecha está apelando directamente a la intervención de la OEA, está claro que han olvidado su historia a corto plazo. Según un artículo publicado

An Open Letter to the Secretary General of the OAS

Luis Leonardo Almagro Lemes Honorable Secretary-General,

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals from the United States and Canada, are deeply concerned by your intervention in Venezuela on behalf of the opposition United Democratic Roundtable (MUD) and its allies in Washington as well as your relentless attacks on the administration of President Nicolás Maduro. Venezuela is at a crossroads, facing both an economic crisis and political polarization. Far from helping Venezuela move toward a peaceful and cooperative resolution of these challenges, your intercessions over the past year have served to exacerbate the conflict. We urge you to avoid further partisanship and play a more constructive and impartial role in promoting peace and dialogue. For an example of a such an approach one only need look to the mediation efforts of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which has the backing of UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon.

We are particularly concerned about your strong support for the MUD's efforts to pressure the OAS into invoking the Inter-American Democratic Charter against the Maduro government; your attempts to cast doubt on the democratic legitimacy of last December's legislative elections during the weeks preceding the vote; your intense lobbying in favor of the highly controversial amnesty bill; the selective nature of your expressions of indignation over violations of human rights; and your failure to denounce Washington's increasingly belligerent

posture towards Caracas. We would like to address each of these concerns briefly, in turn:

Support for the invocation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter In a statement delivered on March 8, 2016, you invited the opposition majority of the National Assembly to submit a request to the OAS to invoke the Inter-American Democratic Charter against the Maduro administration. Now that you have received a formal request from opposition representatives, your antagonistic conduct in this matter precludes you from playing any credible role in advancing the cause of dialogue between the MUD and the Maduro administration. If the Charter were invoked it could provide political cover for a foreign military intervention in Venezuela, which would seriously undermine rather than fortify constitutional rule. The Charter is an important instrument for expressing multilateral support for the right to democratic governance and the obligation of member states to promote and defend democracy, but the Charter now appears to have been politicized as a tool for undermining a government because it is not aligned with U.S. foreign policy objectives.

The December 6, 2015 legislative elections In a letter to Tibisay Lucena, President of the Venezuelan National Electoral Council

(CNE),
on

November

10, 2015, you argued that "There exist reasons to believe that in these moments the conditions in which the people are going to vote on the 6th of December does not guarantee the degree of transparency and electoral justice that you from the CNE ought to guarantee."

While no electoral procedures are ever perfect, your intervention buttressed the Venezuelan opposition's alarmist claim that the legislative elections were at risk of being stolen by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV); a suspicion that was exposed as groundless not just by the actual election procedures but also the result, in which the MUD won a majority of seats. Since that election, your expressions of increasing acrimony towards the Maduro administration and unbending prejudice in favor of the opposition forces have severely hindered the efforts of other regional and international bodies to promote dialogue and peace.

Lobbying in support of the Amnesty Law Such open bias and deliberate interference in Venezuela's internal politics was further demonstrated by your decision to lobby in favor of the highly controversial Amnesty Bill. On April 6, your statement that Maduro should "sign the law" and "implement it immediately" was particularly brazen, as this bill would have provided impunity for far too broad a list of offenses, including certain violent crimes. Far from being a case of partisan obstructionism, there were legitimate reasons why President Maduro did not sign off on the bill and why it was subsequently found unconstitutional by the Supreme Tribunal of Justice. Rather than taking a reflexively anti-government position, we urge you to instead support a broad-based process that involves all stakeholders in the pursuit of truth, justice, and reconciliation.

Selective indignation over human rights abuses in Venezuela Since human rights are universal, accountability should extend

IN DEFENCE OF VENEZUELA



without prejudice to all countries and governments in the Hemisphere. We are concerned that you direct a level of criticism at Venezuela that is inordinate given that states like Honduras, Mexico and Colombia, that incidentally are firm U.S. allies, come under far less scrutiny for their massive violations of human rights. Furthermore, the OAS has made no vigorous objection to the violations of the rights of thousands of undocumented persons, including children fleeing the violence in Central America, who have been deported from the United States without adequate legal representation. In this context, your frequent singling out of Venezuela's human rights record, while failing to condemn the many well-documented instances of right-wing violence, calls into question your evenhandedness. We urge you to use your office to bring attention to all human rights abuses in Venezuela as well as throughout the hemisphere.

Silence in the face of U.S. threats against Venezuela Since the election of Hugo Chavez as President in 1998, Washington has been bent on regime change in Venezuela. The U.S. renewal of an Executive Order in March 2016 against Venezuela declares "a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States," despite Venezuela posing no security threat to any other country on earth. Indeed, in stark contrast to the United States, Venezuela has not invaded another country nor does it have military bases (or detention camps!) on foreign soil.

We support the constructive approach of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which has stated that "the Secretary-General of UNASUR has not and will not stop advocating for dialogue, coexistence, and, above all, peace in Venezuela, working to find alternatives for promoting political stability and economic recovery that our sister republic deserves." UNASUR has already shown its good will and served as a reliable mediator by accompanying President Maduro's initiative for a Commission for Truth, Justice and Reparations of the Victims of Violence and sending a group of economic advisors to work with the Venezuelan government on proposals to stabilize the economy and sustain the social projects. Rather than playing such a blatantly partisan role in the region, we encourage you, as the Secretary-General of the OAS, to heed this example and work together with UNASUR in their advocacy of a peaceful and democratic resolution of the issues facing Venezuela.

ALBA Statement on OAS Threats Against VENEZUELA

The member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – People's Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), categorically reject the Press Release issued on May 18, 2016, by the General Secretary of the Organization of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro, and the systematic aggressions of whom occupies the General Secretariat of this organization against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, its legitimate Government, and its people.

The member countries of ALBA-TCP, express our heartfelt solidarity with President Nicolás Maduro and his people, and declare that the grievances against the Venezuelan leader invalidate the General Secretary to pronounce about any affair related to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as his commentaries offend every single sovereign State.

Mr. Almagro endorsed the agenda of the Venezuelan political opposition and allowed the General Secretariat of the OAS to serve as shelter to its most radical and violent sector. Just a few days ago Mr. Almagro participated in an event in the city of Miami, where in presence of Venezuelan and foreign representatives of the opposition, a call was made to invade Venezuela, threatening the right for development, peace and homeland of the Venezuelan people.

The member countries of ALBA-TCP manifest our solidarity with the sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, with its President and its people, and reject the mediatic, economic, diplomatic and financial aggressions that seek to overthrow its legitimate Government.

The member countries of ALBA-TCP acknowledge the hard work of the Venezuelan Government in the promotion and protection of human rights, justice and peace, to contain the plan of international intervention intended against Venezuela, threatening not only the stability of this sister nation, but our region's stability as well.

Finally, the member countries of ALBA-TCP trust in the unbreakable will of the Venezuelan people, guided by the thinking of Simón Bolívar and his capacity to close lines in the face of this continued threat against the democratic stability of the country and the region.

Caracas, May 19th 2016

ALBA-TCP rechaza agresiones en contra de VENEZUELA

Los países miembros de la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América-Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (ALBA-TCP) rechazan categóricamente el Comunicado de Prensa emitido el 18 de mayo de 2016, por el Secretario General de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA), Luis Almagro, así como las agresiones sistemáticas de quien ocupa la secretaría general de esta organización en contra de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, su Gobierno legítimo y su pueblo.

Los países miembros del ALBA – TCP expresan su sentida solidaridad con el Presidente Nicolás Maduro y su pueblo, y declaran que los agravios contra el mandatario venezolano invalidan al Secretario General para pronunciarse sobre cualquier asunto relacionado con la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, a la vez que sus comentarios ofenden a todos los Estados soberanos.

El Señor Almagro hizo suya la agenda de la oposición política venezolana y permitió que la Secretaría General de la OEA sirviese de amparo de su sector más radical y violento. Hace apenas unos días, el Sr. Almagro participó de un evento en la ciudad de Miami donde en presencia de opositores venezolanos y extranjeros se hizo un llamado a invadir a Venezuela, amenazando el derecho al desarrollo, a la paz y a la patria del pueblo venezolano.

Los países del ALBA-TCP reiteramos nuestra solidaridad con la hermana República Bolivariana de Venezuela, con su Presidente y su Pueblo, y rechazamos las agresiones mediáticas, económicas, diplomáticas y financieras que pretenden el derrocamiento de su gobierno legítimo.

Los países del ALBA-TCP reconocen la ardua labor del Gobierno venezolano en la promoción y protección de los derechos humanos, la justicia y la paz, para contener el plan de intervención internacional que se pretende contra Venezuela, amenazando no sólo la estabilidad de este hermano país sino también de nuestra región.

Finalmente, los países miembros del ALBA – TCP confían en la inquebrantable voluntad del pueblo venezolano, guiados por el pensamiento de Simón Bolívar y en su capacidad de cerrar filas ante esta continua amenaza contra la estabilidad democrática del país y de la región.

Caracas, 19 de mayo de 2016

U.S. HANDS OFF BRAZIL! Latin America Condemns Soft Coup In Brazil! Reinstate Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff Now!



Introduction By Tamara Hansen

Was there a coup d'état in Brazil?

Many people around the world are wondering what happened to Brazil's elected president, Dilma Rousseff, who was recently removed from power by the Brazilian senate amidst allegations of corruption. It is clear that those who have replaced her are already busy at work

trying to move the country towards a more right wing, neo-liberal agenda. There have also been documents uncovered by Wikileaks demonstrating the collusion by the new government, led by now-President Michel Temer, and the U.S. government. This has only fuelled further questions about where this campaign against President Dilma Rousseff has really come from. At the same time, countries and organizations around the world are coming together to condemn

U.S. meddling in Brazilian affairs, as well as to defend the modest gains of working people in Brazil against this new reactionary government. One of the International organizations who has made a strong statement about the struggle in Brazil is ALBA, we have reprinted their statement in English and Spanish here. We have also added the strong voice of Cuba and their Ministry of Foreign affairs (MINREX).

The ALBA-TCP strongly rejects coup against Brazil

The member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP), informed about the voting occurred yesterday in the Brazil's Senate, strongly reject the parliamentary-judicial coup d'état that is taking place in that country.

The impeachment against the legitimate president Dilma Rousseff is a strategy disguised with legality to remove her from office and to discredit her and the Workers Party without neither legitimate reasons nor juridical basis.

Oligarchic sectors, with the support of imperialist interests, transnational corporations and media groups, intend to restore neoliberalism in Brazil and other countries in our region, are seeking to align Brazilian foreign policy with imperial interests and dismantle social programs of the PT governments, which have largely benefited millions of Brazilian citizens, as never before in the history of that sister nation, in areas such as food, health, housing and education and social security.

The attack against the will of millions of Brazilians expressed at the ballot boxes, is a new expression of the reactionary counter-offensive aimed at overthrowing governments that have favored the most needy, and if consummated, it would threaten democracy, peace and stability in Brazil and in our region, as well as the validity of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the II Summit of CELAC held in Havana in 2014.

We, the member countries of the ALBA-TCP, express our firmest solidarity with President Dilma Rousseff and the leader of the Workers Party, Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva, also subjected to harassment by right-wing factors. We reiterate our support to the brave Brazilian people, who have gone to the streets to reject this abominable action.

Caracas, May 12th 2016

El ALBA-TCP rechazamos enérgicamente el golpe de Estado en Brasil

Los países de la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América-Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos, ALBA-TCP, informados de la votación ocurrida en el día de ayer en el Senado de Brasil, rechazamos enérgicamente el golpe de Estado parlamentario-judicial que está camino de consumarse en ese país.

El juicio político contra la presidenta legítima Dilma Rousseff es una maniobra, disfrazada de legalidad, para apartarla de su cargo y desacreditarla a ella y al Partido de los Trabajadores (PT), sin que existan razones legítimas ni fundamentos jurídicos para ello.

Sectores oligárquicos, con el respaldo de intereses imperialistas, de las transnacionales y de grupos mediáticos, pretenden reinstaurar el neoliberalismo en Brasil y en otros países de nuestra región, alinear la política exterior brasileña con los intereses imperiales y dismantelar los programas sociales de los gobiernos del PT, que han beneficiado ampliamente a millones de ciudadanos brasileños, como nunca antes en la historia de esa hermana nación, en áreas como la alimentación, la salud, la vivienda y la educación.

Este atentado contra la voluntad popular de millones de brasileños expresada en las urnas, es una nueva expresión de la contraofensiva reaccionaria dirigida a derrocar a los gobiernos que han favorecido a los más necesitados y si se consuma definitivamente, amenazaría la democracia, la paz y la estabilidad en Brasil y en nuestra región, y con ello la vigencia de la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, adoptada por los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno en la II Cumbre de la CELAC, en La Habana, en el año 2014.

Los países del ALBA-TCP expresamos nuestra más firme solidaridad a la presidenta Dilma Rousseff y al líder del Partido de los Trabajadores Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, también sometido al acoso de la derecha, y reiteramos nuestro apoyo al valiente pueblo brasileño, que ha salido a las calles a rechazar esta abominable acción.

Caracas, May 12th 2016

Declaration by the Revolutionary Government of Cuba:

"The Brazilian people, the country's left-wing forces and combative social movements reject the coup and oppose any attempt to dismantle key social programs"

Havana, 12 May 2016

The revolutionary government of the Republic of Cuba has repeatedly condemned the parliamentary/judicial coup d'état in Brazil, disguised as legal, which has been in the making for months. Today saw a fundamental step towards realization of the aims of the coup plotters: a majority of the Brazilian senators have decided to continue the political trial proceedings against Brazil's legitimately-elected president, Dilma Rousseff, and thereby "temporarily" remove her from office for up to 180 days, during which time the senate must determine, by a two-thirds majority of its members, her definitive dismissal.

The real situation is that a stratagem concocted by elements of the Brazilian oligarchy, supported by the reactionary, imperialist media, seeks to derail the political agenda of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), oust the legitimate government and usurp the power they were unable to win at the polls.

What is happening in Brazil is part of a reactionary counter-offensive by imperialism and the oligarchy against the revolutionary and progressive governments of Latin America & the Caribbean, threatening peace and the stability of the nations, breaching the spirit and the letter of the proclamation of Latin America & the Caribbean as a Peace Zone, signed at the 2nd CELAC summit held in Havana in January 2014, by the region's heads of state and of government.

In the words of the Chairman of the Councils of State and of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, Gen. Raúl Castro Ruz, at the closing ceremony of the 6th Ordinary Period of Sessions of the National Assembly of the People's Power on 29 December last, "History shows that that when the right-wing comes to power, it has no compunction in dismantling social policies, benefitting the wealthy, reestablishing neoliberalism and applying harsh forms of shock therapy against the workers, women and young people".

The Brazilian people, the country's left-wing forces and combative social movements reject the coup and oppose any attempt to dismantle the key social programs implemented by the PT, headed by Lula and Dilma, such as 'Family Shopping Basket', 'More Doctors' 'My Home, My Life', and 'Hunger Zero', which have changed the lives of tens of millions of Brazilians.

Dilma, Lula, the Partido dos Trabalhadores and the people of Brazil have, and can always count on, Cuba's solidarity.

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Declaración del Gobierno Revolucionario de Cuba:

"El pueblo brasileño, las fuerzas políticas de izquierda y los combativos movimientos sociales de esa nación rechazan el golpe y se oponen a cualquier intento de dismantelar los importantes programas sociales desarrollados"

La Habana, 12 de mayo de 2016

El Gobierno Revolucionario de la República de Cuba ha denunciado de manera reiterada el golpe de estado parlamentario-judicial, disfrazado de legalidad, que se gesta desde hace meses en Brasil. Hoy se consumó un paso fundamental para los objetivos golpistas. La mayoría de los senadores brasileños decidió continuar el proceso de juicio político contra la presidenta legítimamente electa de Brasil, Dilma Rousseff, y con ello, separarla "provisionalmente" de su cargo por un período de hasta 180 días, en que el Senado debe decidir, mediante el voto de dos tercios de sus integrantes, la destitución definitiva.

Se trata, en realidad, de un artificio armado por sectores de la oligarquía en ese país, apoyados por la gran prensa reaccionaria y el imperialismo, con

el propósito de revertir el proyecto político del Partido de los Trabajadores, derrocar al gobierno legítimo y usurpar el poder que no han podido ganar con el voto electoral.

Lo que ocurre en Brasil es parte de la contraofensiva reaccionaria del imperialismo y la oligarquía contra los gobiernos revolucionarios y progresistas de América Latina y el Caribe, que amenaza la paz y la estabilidad de las

naciones, contraviniendo el espíritu y la letra de la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz, firmada en la II Cumbre de la CELAC en enero de 2014 en La Habana por los jefes de estado y de gobierno de la región.

Como expresara el Presidente de los Consejos de Estado y de Ministros de la República de Cuba, General de Ejército Raúl Castro Ruz, en la clausura del VI Período Ordinario de Sesiones de la Asamblea Nacional de Poder Popular el pasado 29 de diciembre: "La historia demuestra que cuando la derecha llega al gobierno no duda en dismantelar las políticas sociales, beneficiar a los ricos, restablecer el neoliberalismo y aplicar crueles terapias de choque contra los trabajadores, las mujeres y los jóvenes".

El pueblo brasileño, las fuerzas políticas de izquierda y los combativos movimientos sociales de esa nación rechazan el golpe y se oponen a cualquier intento de dismantelar los importantes programas sociales desarrollados por los gobiernos del Partido de los Trabajadores, con Lula y Dilma al frente, como "Bolsa Familia", "Más Médicos", "Mi Casa-Mi Vida" y "Hambre Cero", que cambiaron la vida de decenas de millones de personas en ese país.

Dilma, Lula, el Partido de los Trabajadores y el pueblo de Brasil cuentan y contarán siempre con toda la solidaridad de Cuba.



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The Newspaper Of

FIRE THIS TIME
MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

www.firethistime.net

Volume 10 Issue 6

June 2016

Published Monthly

Political Editor:

Ali Yerevani - editorftt@mail.com @aliyerevani

Editorial Board:

Tamara Hansen, Aaron Mercredi, Alison Bodine,
Nita Palmer, Janine Solanki, Thomas Davies,
Ali Yerevani

Layout & Design:

Azza Rojbi, Noah Fine, Tamara Hansen, Max Tennant,
Sarah Alwell, Lien Gangte, Thomas Davies,
Nader Moradi

Copy Editors:

Tamara Hansen, Nita Palmer

Publicity & Distribution Coordinator:

Thomas Davies

Production Manager:

Azza Rojbi

Contributors to this Issue:

Macarena Cataldo, Sanam Soltanzadeh, Manuel Yepe,
Nader Moradi, Noah Fine, Max Tennant, Azza Rojbi

Contact:

Phone (778) 938-1557

Email firethistimecanada@yandex.com

Mail PO Box 21607 Vancouver BC, V5L 5G3

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-ISSN-1712-1817-

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to the attacks. Some journalists say wearing a press armband turns them into a target of police violence."

Imperialist War abroad!

While the French government and police continues their attacks and violent crackdown on poor and working people in France, the French military continues its imperialist wars and missions in Africa and the Middle East.

On April 29, 2015 French President Hollande announced an extra €3.8 billion (\$4.2 billion) in defense spending over the next four years to cover both overseas military operations and permanent deployment of troops throughout France. The current €31.4 billion defense budget will be increased, with an extra €600 million in spending next year, reaching as much as €1.5 billion in 2019. Further that week Finance Minister Michel Sapin said in a radio interview with Europe1 that to balance the books after the increase in military budget, there will be cuts to other ministries resources such as in the healthcare and housing sector.

France has around 10,300 military personnel deployed in overseas operations (as of 25 February 2015). Over 3,000 troops are spread across five countries in Africa — Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad — as part of Operation Burkhane. France was the first European country to join U.S. led bombing campaign on Iraq and Syria with a total of 3,200 military troops deployed to Iraq.

In 2011, France pushed heavily for intervention in Libya. An imperialist coalition of US /UK/France/Canada/NATO bombed Libya, flying over 26,000 bombing sorties, killing over 2000 civilians and destroying the country's infrastructure. The western intervention in Libya was justified in the name of support for human rights and democracy. However, over five years after the bombing, the situation in Libya is devastated and unlivable with the UN estimating that over 400,000 Libyans were forced to flee their homes. In addition the French newspaper Le Monde reported on Feb 24, 2016 that French Special Forces and intelligence commandos are engaged in covert operations in Libya in conjunction with the United States and Britain. Le Monde called it France's Secret War in Libya.

After the Terrorist attacks on Paris, France's imperialist government keeps drumming and preparing for more wars and interventions by playing the card of the "war on terror". François Hollande

vowed that France will continue its military interventions abroad to fight global terrorism and that "France will remain a country of freedom".

Freedom! It seems crucial here to remind Mr. Hollande of France's bloody colonial history.

Where was this freedom when France plundered for decades the resources of colonies in Africa? Where was this freedom when French military occupied tortured, massacred and killed people in North Africa, over one million murdered in Algeria? Where was this freedom when the French government censored and repressed hip-hop artists of North African descent for speaking up against the government's racist policies towards the youth of the French banlieue? Where was this freedom when in 2005 the French government tried to impose on French school teachers a requirement to only teach the "positive values" of colonialism to their students? I see no freedom Mr. Hollande, I only see imperialist hypocrisy!

The Struggle in France Continues...

The best way to counter terrorism is by showing strength and unity of all working, poor and oppressed layers of the French society in fighting together against austerity and for an anti-war government.

The students and workers in France are standing up for their rights and against the government's pro-business "Loi Travail". French labour unions have called for new strikes in the coming days that will target trains, the Paris subway system, ports and possibly airports. About 40 percent of France's high-speed trains and more than half of regional trains will be cancelled.

The seven unions that have been active in fighting this labor reform law — the CGT, Workers Force (FO), Unitary Union Federation (FSU), Solidarity (Solidaire), National Union of French Students (UNEF), National High School Union (UNL) and the Independent and Democratic Federation of High Schools (FIDL) issued a united call for a national protest June 14 in Paris. On this day the French Senate is due to deliberate about the new labour law.

This mobilization against "Loi Travail" will be a good test and experience for progressive left and working and poor class in France as the economical crisis deepens and the government will keep escalating and pushing its austerity program.

"The nation is angry, and has every right to express itself" said Jean Durand, a militant with the CGT union "we'll continue our protests until the government backs down."

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

OUR HERITAGE



Eleanor Marx
(1855 – 1898)

*Youngest daughter of Karl Marx
and leading Communist trade
union organizer, journalist
and translator in England and
internationally.*

"For us there is no more a 'women's question' from the bourgeois standpoint than there is a men's question. Where the bourgeois women demand rights that are of help to us too, we will fight together with them, just as the men of our class did not reject the right to vote because it came from the bourgeois class. We too will not reject any benefit, gained by the bourgeois women in their own interests, which they provide us willingly or unwillingly. We accept these benefits as weapons, weapons that enable us to fight better on the side of our working-class brothers. We are not women arrayed in struggle against men but workers who are in struggle against the exploiters."

(From Women's Trade Unions in England)

Continued from page 22

Washington, last November.

"We can confirm an increase in official visits in both directions, including high-level visits such as that of President Obama in March of 2016," she noted.

"Meetings of a technical nature on topics of mutual interest, between experts from the two countries, have also increased, as well as the number of bilateral instruments signed to expand mutually beneficial cooperation."

Nevertheless, Vidal said, progress has not been as rapid or of the same magnitude, in the economic arena, because the blockade remains in full force.

"Despite Obama's measures, which are positive but insufficient, significant limitations persist," she explained, citing limits on the export of Cuban products to the U.S. and barriers faced by companies from that country wishing to invest in Cuba, in sectors other than telecommunications.

"The Cuban delegation again insisted that the lifting of the blockade is a priority, because it affects Cubans and their ties with third countries, including the United States."

Cuba had the opportunity to provide the U.S. delegation with a list of damages caused by the blockade during the last few

months.

Among them, Vidal cited fines levied on a French company and two U.S. companies, as well as 14 cases of financial persecution of Cuba, including the closing of accounts and the denial of services.

A total of 13 international banks have been involved in these types of financial affectations, even when currencies of other nations were involved, not the U.S. dollar, Vidal reported, saying, "We are sharing all of this so that the extraterritorial nature of the blockade and the reach this policy has beyond relations between Cuba and the United States, can be seen."

Cuba also reiterated the necessity of returning territory illegally occupied by the Guantánamo Naval Base, as critical to the normalization of relations.

"This is the only case in the world of a military base rented for perpetuity. There is no similar example anywhere in the world. It is also the only case of a base occupying land against the will of the people and government of another country," she emphasized.

** Sergio Alejandro Gomez is a Cuban journalist and chief of the International News desk for Granma*

Reprinted from: www.granma.cu

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Pero incluso en el momento en que se logren completar esas transacciones, Cuba aún estaría sujeta a otras limitaciones, dijo Vidal.

Lo que recoge la medida estadounidense son solamente las transacciones financieras internacionales y no aquellas entre Estados Unidos y Cuba.

Explicó que, para normalizar las relaciones bancarias entre ambos países, se le debe permitir a Cuba abrir cuentas de corresponsalía en instituciones financieras estadounidenses. De lo contrario, va a ser necesario seguir triangulando los pagos entre ambos países, lo que eleva los costos para todos los involucrados.

BLOQUEO

La Comisión Bilateral, refirió Vidal, pasó revista a la marcha de los acuerdos adoptados desde la segunda reunión en noviembre pasado en Washington.

"Pudimos constatar un aumento de las visitas oficiales en ambas direcciones, incluido visitas de alto nivel como la del propio presidente Barack Obama en marzo de 2016", dijo.

"También se han incrementado los encuentros

de carácter técnico entre expertos de ambos países sobre temas de interés común, así como el número de instrumentos bilaterales para expandir la cooperación mutuamente beneficiosa".

Sin embargo, los avances no han ido a la misma velocidad y ni han sido de la misma magnitud en la esfera económica, porque el bloqueo continúa en vigor, señaló Vidal,

"A pesar de las medidas de Obama, que son positivas pero insuficientes, persisten restricciones significativas", precisó y citó los límites a la exportación de productos cubanos hacia los Estados Unidos y las barreras para que las empresas de ese país inviertan en Cuba en sectores distintos al de las telecomunicaciones.

"La delegación cubana volvió a insistir que el levantamiento del bloqueo es una prioridad porque afecta a los cubanos y sus vínculos con terceros países, incluido los Estados Unidos".

También Cuba tuvo la oportunidad de entregar a la contraparte estadounidense una lista de afectaciones que han tenido lugar en los últimos meses producto del bloqueo.

Entre ellas, Vidal mencionó tres multas que han sido aplicadas a una compañía francesa y a dos compañías de Estados Unidos, así como

Battle of Ideas Press

5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership

By Tamara Hansen

"The battles Cuba has fought have not been easy. Some were physical battles, such as the battle against bandits in the Escambray Mountains or the Bay of Pigs invasion. However, most were not battles of physical might, but battles of ideas. But with every twist and turn, every up and down Fidel has been one of the first leaders to say, 'this way forward' or 'we made a wrong turn, we must change course.'"

Tamara Hansen is the coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba ten times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.



April 2010, paperback, 312 pages, illustrated, \$10.00
ISBN 978-0-9864716-1-2 | Copyright © 2010 by Battle of Ideas Press
PO Box 21607, Vancouver, BC, V5L 5G3, Canada

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14 acciones negativas de carácter financiero contra Cuba, como son los casos de cierre de cuentas o finalización de servicios.

En total 13 bancos internacionales han estado involucrados en este tipo de afectaciones financieras, incluso cuando se utilizan monedas distintas al dólar.

"Compartimos todo esto para que se vea el carácter extraterritorial del bloqueo y el alcance que tiene esta política más allá de las relaciones entre Cuba y Estados", precisó.

Cuba también reafirmó la necesidad de la devolución del territorio ocupado ilegalmente por la Base Naval en Guantánamo, como elemento prioritario para la normalización de las relaciones.

"Es el único caso de una base militar del mundo que está radicada en un territorio arrendado a perpetuidad. No hay otro ejemplo similar en el mundo. También el único caso de una base que se mantiene ocupada en contra de la voluntad del pueblo y el gobierno de ese país", afirmó.

** Sergio Alejandro Gómez - Periodista cubano y Jefe de la página internacional del diario Granma
Desde: www.granma.cu*

As Long as Injustice Continues Against Cuba, So will Solidarity! Monthly Protest Campaign Continues to Demand an End to Blockade



By Noah Fine

On May 17th 2016, dozens of Cuba supporters gathered in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver to demand an end to the cruel and illegal U.S. blockade on Cuba in an action organized by Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade-Vancouver (FCAB-Van). This was the 9th such action that have been taking place monthly since the U.S. and Cuba re-established diplomatic relations.

Participants chanted "Hey Obama, lift the blockade!" as they circled in front of the Consulate in energetic rounds of picketing. A number of speakers also addressed the participants. 3 of the speakers had just returned from Cuba where they participated in the annual Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade. FCAB-Vancouver co-coordinator Azza Rojbi and organizer Janine Solanki, gave reports about the blockade as they learned about its effects while in Cuba. FCAB organizer Max Tennant read a poem about Cuba and the blockade which he wrote while visiting the island.

The protest was brought to a close by coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), Tamara Hansen. Tamara spoke clarifying that despite opening up of relations between the U.S. and Cuba, the most criminal aspects of U.S. policy have not been normalized. "As long as the blockade continues and Guantanamo is occupied by the U.S. military, there will be no normalization between the two countries," Tamara explained.

FCAB-Vancouver invited participants again to continue joining in on the 17th of each month in front of the U.S. Consulate until they day the blockade is lifted, Guantanamo Bay is returned and the U.S. stops all interventions against Cuba and its self-determination.

Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!

Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!

Stop the Campaign of 'Regime Change' in Cuba and Immediately Stop Interfering in Cuba's Sovereignty and Self-Determination!

By Noah Fine

Over the past 5 months the Bolivarian Revolution led by the President of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro and the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) have faced intensified attacks by Venezuela's counter-revolutionary opposition. At every turn the opposition backed by the U.S. government is struggling to destabilize Venezuela and to find a way to force the overthrow of Nicolás Maduro, whether it be through unconstitutional legislation, an economic war, or even through foreign intervention. For this reason international actions in solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution and President Maduro are of critical importance.

On Friday May 13, 2016, Fire This Time's Venezuela Solidarity Campaign organized two actions in solidarity with Venezuela. The first was a protest picket in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. Supporters of the Bolivarian Revolution gathered to demand an end to U.S.

VANCOUVER ACTIONS CONTINUE TO DEMAND: U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!



intervention in Venezuela and demonstrate their support to the democratically elected President Nicolás Maduro. Coordinator of the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, Alison Bodine welcomed participants to the protest and invited up speakers in between rounds of picketing the Consulate. Among the speakers were long-time social justice activist dating back to the Civil Rights Movement, David Whittlesey who spoke about the U.S.'s history of intervention and war in Latin America.

After the protest, the group moved locations over to the Vancouver Art Gallery in order to set up an information display, hand out fliers and collect petition signatures demanding: U.S. Hands Off Venezuela! Hundreds of signatures were collected and thousands of people were approached and engaged in discussion on U.S. intervention in Venezuela and the gains of the Bolivarian Revolution.

The Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign plans to continue actions in solidarity with Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution and demand that the U.S. respect the self-determination of Venezuela.

U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!

Domenico Binetti



Clockwise from top left: a young Domenico at a protest (undated); Domenico for the Cuban 5 May 2011; Domenico protesting the U.S. Blockade on Cuba January 2016; Domenico & family celebrate the gains of the Cuban revolution New Year's Eve 2014.

*In loving memory of our friend
& compañero Domenico Binetti
Born on November 26, 1935 in Molfetta, Italy
Passed Away on May 9, 2016 in Vancouver, Canada*



By Tamara Hansen

This month we lost an important friend and compañero in Vancouver, Domenico Binetti. On May 20, 2016 friends and co-fighters gathered to remember this strong willed and passionate revolutionary socialist fighter.

It began with the host of the memorial, Luciano Sanchez, sharing some of his favorite memories of his friend. Domenico travelled extensively throughout the world. He lived all throughout Europe and Latin America. He worked in many different fields, but especially as a welder. Born during World War II in Mussolini's Italy, Domenico grew up with a healthy hatred for imperialist wars and injustice. He spent some time in Peru, where he met his wife Alejandrina. It was then here in Canada that they lived together and had a beautiful daughter, Nadia.

Luciano spoke movingly of the times he spent with Domenico, "Domenic, do you remember when we used to talk about football? Do you remember, old man, when Uruguay beat Brazil? He told me, about the series in 52 and how Maradona has always been the best player of all times. Domenic, do you remember when we spoke together about societies with more justice and solidarity? You were talking to me about Lenin, Vladimir Ilich, you were telling me about Leon Trotsky, you were telling me about Antonio Gramsci, of Rosa Luxemburg, of Kerensky, to name a few. We would talk about the political and economic situation in Europe. He always spoke about the failures of social

democracy, and the world debt. He said the debt was \$230 trillion and Domenico would say 'who created this debt? The bourgeois class supported by imperialism. They accumulate great wealth, while others sleep on the streets and many children die of hunger'. Domenic, do you remember when we would walk together? You liked walking a lot, and your bike that took you to many places and protests. Today your bike is waiting for you to travel out into the universe."

Others added to the commemoration, including Alicia Barsallo who was active in politics with Domenico. She explained, "I am one of the people who was privileged to have known Domenico Binetti and to have been inspired by his perennial passion for change. His confidence that one day this society will become a different society, that justice will be done. That there will come a time that workers will no longer be stepped on anywhere in the world. He was an internationalist. He was a humanist, and really it was very hard to talk to Domenico about anything other than politics." After she concluded her words memorializing Domenico, she sang the International, one of Domenico's favorite songs.

I was also able to share some words on behalf of many activists from the Cuba solidarity movement, as well as on behalf of the Fire This Time editorial board to share some of my feelings about the life of our compañero and my thoughts about losing him. "Over the last week since Domenico's passing, I have been working

with Alejandrina, and others, on creating a short video that we will see today about his life. It has been a humbling experience, looking through his photos, seeing the places he travelled, seeing all of the love and support that he had from family and friends. But of course, being most inspired by his steadfast involvement in causes for social justice and building a better world. It has also been difficult to think that we did not get more of his stories down on paper and that we missed so many stories that are no longer with us.

It was a difficult day when Alejandrina phoned to say Domenico was in hospice. He had come to our picket against the U.S. blockade on Cuba only a month before and had looked so much stronger. It is difficult to hear when someone who has struggled and fought all of their life, for so many noble and dignified causes, is ready to pass on. I will remember Domenico as someone who throughout his illness never forgot his obligation to the rest of the world, to humanity and to the struggle. Who was humble and private and in many ways never interested, as Alicia said, to discuss his personal or health challenges and preferred to talk about politics and oppressed people and how to change the world."

It is with this short article that I hope to share a bit of the love and solidarity that Domenico brought to the struggle for a better world. As I said at the end of my words, "Domenico we will miss you, but we will continue your struggle! iDomenico Binetti Presente!"

EDUCATION IS A RIGHT!

BC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ORGANIZE RALLY AGAINST CUTS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION



Grade 12 student and Vice Chair of Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network Bill Xu speaks during rally



BC Student Alliance organizer Dakota McGovern leads the march in downtown Vancouver

Despite an incredible rainfall which dumped as much rain in one day as the previous two months combined, over 100 students, teachers, parents and concerned community members joined a rally and march in downtown Vancouver to demand the BC Liberal government respect public education and address the growing education crisis.

The rally was organized by the BC Student Alliance, a highschool student-led organization. It featured an entirely highschool student line-up of speakers who addressed the many negative effects of an underfunded provincial education system. They also connected the fight for public education to global social justice issues such as climate change and racism.

In the rally announcement the students were very clear in their vision for public education, "The 1976 UN Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights deemed Education a fundamental human right. Yet, in BC, our education system has been seriously neglected by the provincial government. We see that students in BC are suffering, from early childhood education, all the way through to post-secondary.

There have been school closures, overcrowded classrooms and a lack of support for children with special needs. The BC Liberal government promised to reduce class-size and class-composition issues quite some time ago; but students are still waiting for support that they desperately need."

Since 2002, BC has lost the equivalent of 3,500 full-time teachers and according to the BC Teachers Federation the province underfunds every student in BC by \$1000 below the national average.

BC Students aren't the only ones fighting back against cuts to public education.

As governments around the world continue to prioritize wars, occupations and ensuring corporate profits at the expense of basic public services such as healthcare and education, students around have taken to the streets to demand their rights. In 2012, sustained massive protests of hundreds of thousands of Quebec students against an attempt to hike tuition fees were successful in winning a provincial tuition freeze. Students around the world continue to be engaged in similar battles as they are forced to defend their education and their futures against increasing government cuts.

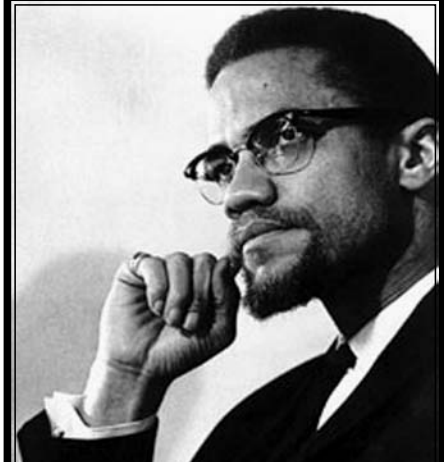
The good news is that students continue to be willing to organize to defend their rights, and these protests are often connected to broader coalitions of teachers, trade unions and social justice organizations all fighting against government austerity programs. We all need to join students and teachers in defending public education as a basic human right.

Stop Cuts to Education Now!

Education is a Right!

Money For Healthcare and Education,
Not for War and Occupation!

"By Any Means Necessary..."



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Interview with Bernice Bass

Dec. 27, 1964

"So these powers realize that they've been pushed against the wall during recent years and the only weapon that they have against this force that has been pushing them against the wall is divide and conquer—the tactic that they've always used. So that, if I may finish, so that in every area where you find people who have been colonized and oppressed today striving toward freedom, you find that whereas in the past they got along, today they're fighting each other. Just like in British Guyana—it's the Asians against the Black man. And this is not indigenous trouble that stems from the people themselves. It's instigated by outside forces. And then it's blown up to give the impression that the fight that's going on among them or between them is something other than what it actually is. [...] you'll find that they usually take a different pattern than that which is developing on the African continent or in British Guyana. Because if the Asians and the Blacks in British Guyana could live so much in harmony together when the British were there, you tell me why now that the British are being pushed out, or they're being threatened with being pushed out, that all of a sudden the power that could push them out—instead of pushing them out begins to fight among themselves. This is not an accident. And the same pattern is developing in different parts of the world. It's divide and conquer."

LIFT ^{the} U.S. BLOCKADE ^{on} CUBA NOW!



**RETURN
GUANTANAMO TO CUBA NOW!**

**Monthly
Protest
Action!**



**FRIDAY
JUNE 17**

4-5 PM

U.S. CONSULATE

1075 W. PENDER ST.

FRIENDS OF CUBA AGAINST THE U.S. BLOCKADE-VANCOUVER
NoBloqueoVancouver@gmail.com |  @NOBLOQUEOVAN
WWW.VANCUBA/USBLOCKADE.ORG

U.S. HANDS OFF VENEZUELA



FRIDAY JUNE 10

PROTEST ACTION:

**U.S. HANDS OFF
VENEZUELA!**

4-5PM

**U.S. CONSULATE
1075 W. PENDER ST
DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER, CANADA**

PETITION DRIVE+INFO DISPLAY:

**MADURO IS OUR
PRESIDENT!**

5:30-7PM

**VANCOUVER ART
GALLERY**

**ROBSON ST @ HOWE ST
DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER, CANADA**



**Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice (FTTJ)
VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN
WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET**